Negotiating Unsettling Memories: Contemporary Franco-Maghrebi Literature on the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict

by

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Dedicated to my parents,
with heartfelt gratitude

For peace, to life, next year in Jerusalem

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Declaration

Selected material included in this thesis appears in the following publications:

Rebekah Vince, 'The (Im)possibility of the Jewish-Palestinian in Hubert Haddad's *Palestine*', *Francosphères*, 7 (2018), 103-20

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Rebekah Vince, '"L'humain n'a pas de frontière": An Interview with Hubert Haddad', *Bulletin of Francophone Postcolonial Studies*, 8.1 (2017), 2-10

Abstract

This thesis focuses on contemporary Francophone North African writers who deal with the Israeli-Palestinian conflict in their literary work. These authors include Valérie Zenatti, Slimane Benaïssa, André Chouraqui, Hubert Haddad, and Yasmina Khadra. The disciplinary framework combines (Francophone) postcolonial studies, Jewish studies, and memory studies in considering the traumatic legacies of genocide and colonialism which together form an historical backdrop to the Arab-Israeli conflict as depicted in the primary texts. By focusing on the 1990s to the present day, the thesis looks at fictional responses to the breakdown of the so-called peace process, revealing tentative spaces for dialogue and re-evaluation within the texts which allow for unsettling memories to be negotiated. In relation to the authors' own trajectories as well as their works of fiction, the thesis explores alternative identities to the Arab versus Jew and Israeli versus Palestinian antagonisms. Indeed, the thesis highlights the flimsiness of identity binaries between Arab, Jew, Palestinian, and Israeli identities, which are in tension with rather than in opposition to one another, steeped as they are in interrelated traumatic pasts. Moreover, the thesis draws on the concepts of filiation (roots) and affiliation (connections), demonstrating the dialogic potential of the primary texts, which resist

utopian endings but dare to imagine an alternative future of peaceful coexistence.

Introduction: Unsettling Memories, Troubled Identities

It is my conviction that recent texts by Francophone North African writers shed light on the complexity of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, offering tentative spaces for dialogue and hinting at reconciliation within their literary works, in their exploration of memory and identity. This is reflected in their recognition of the legacy of colonial violence and exile alongside the Shoah, their acknowledgement of previous coexistence (and, in some cases, antagonism) between Arabs and Jews in North Africa, and their personal experience of assimilationist policies and Muslim-Jewish relations in France.[1] In the course of the thesis, I shall explore how the legacies of colonialism, the Shoah, and the Nakba play out in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict as portrayed in the works and circumstances of Francophone Arab and/or Jewish writers of North African descent, specifically Valérie Zenatti, Slimane Benaïssa, André Chouraqui, Hubert Haddad, and Yasmina Khadra. Following Jacques Derrida, who coined the term, I argue that the writers studied here can be seen as 'franco-maghrébin' in their combined Francophone,

[1] In the course of this thesis, I have chosen to use the term Shoah meaning "catastrophe" – a word of Hebrew origin which has been adopted into French vocabulary as the preferred term – as opposed to the term Holocaust, originating from the Greek *holokauston*, from *holos* meaning "whole" and *kaustos* meaning "burnt" (ODE).

North African, *troubled* identities.[2] I shall focus on questions of memory and amnesia, filiation and affiliation, hybrid identity, multiple identities, religious identity, exilic or diasporic identity, as well as questions surrounding what it means to be a writer of French/Francophone/world literature. I shall examine references to Arabic and Hebrew as they appear in the texts, paying particular attention to the respective translations of the word 'Catastrophe' (Nakba, Shoah),[3] although I intend to focus mainly on the relationship the authors, and in some cases the characters, have to the French language. Are they identified and/or do they identify themselves as French writers, Francophone writers, world-literature writers of French? Is this by choice, obligation, strategy, necessity? In relation to their literary works and personal trajectories, I shall explore alternative identities to the fixed binary antagonisms of

[2] 'Être franco-maghrébin, l'être "comme moi", ce n'est pas, pas surtout, surtout pas, un surcroît ou une richesse d'identités, d'attributs ou de noms. Cela trahirait plutôt, d'abord, un *trouble de l'identité*'.[2] Jacques Derrida, *Le Monolinguisme de l'autre, ou, La Prothèse d'origine* (Paris: Galilée, 1996), p. 32, original emphasis.

[3] As Gilbert Achcar notes, 'le terme arabe *nakba* [...] est un des équivalents possibles de Shoah en langue arabe, l'autre étant *kâritha* aujourd'hui utilisé pour traduire Shoah en arabe de manière distincte de la tradition de Holocauste, *mahraqa*. Nakba signifie, en effet, "catastrophe douloureuse". Le terme a été utilisé dès 1948 dans le monde arabe pour décrire la fondation de l'Etat d'Israël et ses conséquences: la première guerre israélo-arabe, la défaite des armées arabes, l'exode massif des Palestiniens des territoires tombés sous le contrôle du nouvel Etat et le refus par ce même Etat de leur accorder la permission de retrouver leurs habitations et leurs terres après la fin des hostilités'. Gilbert Achcar, *Les Arabes et la Shoah: La guerre israélo-arabe des récits* (Paris: Sindbad, 2009), p. 48.

Arab versus Jew and Israeli versus Palestinian, which are characteristic of discussions surrounding the Arab-Israeli or Israeli-Palestinian conflict. These alternative identities include the Arab-Jew, the Jewish-Palestinian, and the Bedouin-Israeli. In scrutinising these constructed identities and identity constructs as they appear in the literary texts studied here, I draw on the concepts of filiation (roots) and affiliation (connections), specifically in relation to memory and amnesia.

In the course of the thesis, I shall explore to what extent the theoretical frameworks of postmemory (Marianne Hirsch), multidirectional memory (Michael Rothberg), palimpsestic memory (Max Silverman), and dialogic memory (Aleida Assmann) can be applied to North African texts written in French which concern themselves primarily with the Israeli-Palestinian conflict as overshadowed by the interrelated traumas of the Shoah and colonialism.[4] Moreover, throughout the thesis,

[4] Marianne Hirsch, *The Generation of Postmemory: Writing and Visual Culture After the Holocaust* (Columbia: Columbia University Press, 2012); Michael Rothberg, *Multidirectional Memory: Remembering the Holocaust in the Age of Decolonization* (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 2009); Max Silverman, *Palimpsestic Memory. The Holocaust and Colonialism in French and Francophone Fiction and Film* (New York: Berghahn Books, 2013); Aleida Assmann, 'Dialogic Memory', in *Dialogue as a Trans-disciplinary Concept: Martin Buber's Philosophy of Dialogue and its Contemporary Reception*, ed. by Paul Mendes-Flohr (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2014), pp. 199-214, particularly pp. 210-11; and Aleida Assmann, 'From Collective Violence to a Common Future: Four Models for Dealing with a Traumatic Past', in *Conflict,*

I develop the idea of unsettling or disturbing memories. The term 'unsettling memories' was coined by Emma Tarlo in her writings on the 'emergency' in India, and draws attention to 'both the process of disrupting and unearthing memories and the unsettling nature of memories evoked'.[5] Unsettling or disturbing memories challenge fixed or fixating ones by decentralising and destabilising them. Memories are dislodged if not dismantled in the unsettling process. They are not static settlements but dynamic mobiles, moving in multiple directions and in both senses of the word (empathy and mobility). Here I am drawing from Dominick LaCapra's concept of 'empathic unsettlement' as opposed to 'vicarious victimhood', as well as Rothberg's notion of 'multidirectional memory' and Astrid Erll's idea of 'travelling memory'.[6] These memories need to be negotiated, individually, collectively, dialogically, and ethically, particularly in relation to my case study: Franco-Maghrebi writers that deal with the Israeli-Palestinian conflict both within and outside of their fictional works, underpinned by the traumatic

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Memory Transfers and the Reshaping of Europe ed. by Helena Gonçalves da Silva et al. (Newcastle Upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2010), pp. 8-22, particularly pp. 17-21.

[5] Emma Tarlo, *Unsettling Memories: Narratives of the Emergency in Delhi* (London: Hurst, 2003), p. 1.

[6] Dominick LaCapra, 'Trauma, Absence, Loss', *Critical Inquiry*, 25 (1999), 696-727 (p. 699). Rothberg, *Multidirectional Memory*. See also Michael Rothberg, 'From Gaza to Warsaw: Mapping Multidirectional Memory', *Criticism*, 53 (2011), 523-48. Astrid Erll, 'Travelling Memory', *Parallax*, 17 (2011), 4-18.

legacies of the Shoah and colonialism. This context brings to mind 'resettlements' during the Shoah, refugee settlement and the 'population exchange' argument surrounding the Palestinian Nakba and Jewish exile from Arab countries, as well as contemporary settlements in the West Bank and previously in Gaza, and the unsettled dispute of the faltering peace process. Moreover, and crucially, memory of the Nakba unsettles Jewish Israeli official discourse and memory of the Shoah unsettles Arab Palestinian official discourse. These respective traumatic legacies are fundamental to national self-understanding for both Israelis and Palestinians, providing legitimacy for self-determination and justification for self-defence. It is these foundational memories which are renegotiated in the literary works studied here.

Orientalism, Colonialism, Zionism

2018 marks the forty-year anniversary of Edward Said's *Orientalism*, a founding text in postcolonial studies. According to Said, 'the essence of Orientalism is the ineradicable distinction between Western superiority and Oriental inferiority'.[7] Said focuses on the

[7] Edward Said, *Orientalism* (London: Penguin, 2003 [1978]), p. 42. He summarises the phenomenon of Orientalism as the way in which 'European culture gained in strength and identity by setting itself off against the Orient'. *Ibid*., p. 3.

Arab-Muslim world, yet he hints at the crossover between postcolonial studies and Jewish studies, when he writes that Orientalism is a 'strange secret sharer' of 'Western anti-Semitism'.[8] Orientalism, depicted as 'a colonialist ideology' by Said,[9] is often studied within the context of postcolonial studies and anti-Semitism within the context of Jewish studies. Yet, if Orientalism is a secret sharer of anti-Semitism, perhaps postcolonial studies and Jewish studies are secret sharers too, resembling and borrowing from one another.[10] In their introduction to a special issue on Jewish studies and postcolonialism, published in *The Cambridge Journal of Postcolonial Literary Inquiry* (2016), Willi Goetschel and Ato Quayson write that

> Jewish studies has received new impulses from postcolonial critique just as postcolonial discourse has found inspiration in the work and thought of Jewish critics and intellectuals. But rather than the assimilation of paradigms from each other's discourse, we need to gain a

[8] Said, *Orientalism*, pp. 27-28.

[9] Ivan Davidson Kalmar and Derek J. Penslar, 'Orientalism and the Jews: An Introduction', in *Orientalism and the Jews*, ed. by Ivan Davidson Kalmar and Derek J. Penslar (Waltham, Mass.: Brandeis University Press; Hanover: University Press of New England, 2005), pp. xiii-xl (p. xvi).

[10] See Anna Bernard, 'The Last Jewish Intellectual: Borrowing from Edward Said', *Jewish Quarterly*, 60 (2013), 80-83 (pp. 80-81).

> better understanding of their interface.[11]

Here there is a sense of both interaction and reflection (on and of the other). Indeed, in a lively exchange stimulated by a 'paradigm' article by Bryan Cheyette in the 2017 issue of *The Cambridge Journal of Postcolonial Literary Inquiry*, academics explore what Nils Roemer calls 'the intersectionality of Jewish and postcolonial studies', premised on '[p]lurality instead of singularity'.[12] As Cheyette convincingly argues in *Diasporas of the Mind: Jewish and Postcolonial Writing and the Nightmare of History* (2013), diaspora is one of the key overlaps between Jewish and postcolonial writing, linked to both exile (the body) and imagination (the mind):

> On the one hand, "diaspora" is [...] imbricated in historical narratives concerning a timeless exile from an autochthonous "homeland". On the other, "diaspora" is also commonly understood as a state of creatively disruptive impurity which imagines emergent transnational and postethnic identities and cultures. One definition moves in the direction of historicism, the other in the direction of the

[11] Willi Goetschel and Ato Quayson, 'Introduction: Jewish Studies and Postcolonialism', *The Cambridge Journal of Postcolonial Literary Inquiry*, 3 (2016), 1-9 (p. 3).

[12] Nils Roemer, 'On Cheyette: "Against Supersessionist Thinking: Old and New, Jews and Postcolonialism, the Ghetto and Diaspora"', *The Cambridge Journal of Postcolonial Inquiry*, 5 (2018), 123-28 (p. 124).

> imagination, with the word "diaspora" remaining unstable and elusive.[13]

The texts studied in this thesis are written by authors who have experienced exile, forming part of the Jewish and/or Berber diaspora, and who write imaginatively about a shared though scarred homeland, recognising ethnic, cultural, and religious difference.

Where then to situate in the disciplines this thesis, which explores the situatedness of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict dislocated in literary texts written by North African authors, both Arab and Jewish, living in France and writing in the former colonial language? Following not only Cheyette, but also Ethan Katz, Maud Mandel, and Lisa Moses Leff,[14] this thesis moves at the intersection between Jewish studies and postcolonial studies, specifically in the Francophone context. Both of these fields deal with memory and therefore bringing them into dialogue with the burgeoning field of memory studies (closely related to trauma studies) is a productive exercise and one which is pertinent to the primary texts studied here. Perhaps it is a helpful analogy to think of these fields –

[13] Bryan Cheyette, *Diasporas of the Mind: Jewish and Postcolonial Writing and the Nightmare of History* (London: Yale University Press, 2013), p. xiii.

[14] Cheyette, *Diasporas of the Mind*; and Bryan Cheyette, 'Against Supersessionist Thinking: Old and New, Jews and Postcolonialism, the Ghetto and Diaspora', *The Cambridge Journal of Postcolonial Literary Inquiry*, 4 (2017), pp. 424-39. Ethan B. Katz, Lisa Moses Leff, and Maud S. Mandel, eds., *Colonialism and the Jews* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2017).

(Francophone) postcolonial studies, Jewish studies, memory studies, trauma studies – as not fenced in or enclosed but open, wild, 'ill-disciplined' fields with unclear boundary lines.[15] Rather than supplanting one another, these fields overlap, intersect, cross-pollinate. As Roemer writes, 'the field of Jewish and postcolonial studies [...] exists as a multidisciplinary field of intersection between disciplines across the globe'.[16] Moreover, Françoise Lionnet points out the benefits of 'putting postcolonial and Francophone theories in direct dialogue', which this thesis aims to do by bringing Francophone thinkers, postcolonial theorists, and also Jewish writers into 'lateral' and 'transversal' conversation with one another,[17] including Albert Memmi, Frantz Fanon, Jacques Derrida, Edward Said, and Ella Shohat. As Lionnet notes, '[c]omparative work is [...] becoming ever more urgent in order to formulate analytical frameworks that can take into account the significant contributions of Francophone and Arabophone North African scholars and artists to an array of critical practices that are synonymous with Anglophone postcolonial studies'.[18] This urgency is particularly

[15] See Bryan Cheyette, 'Jewish/Postcolonial Diasporas: On Being Ill-disciplined', *Wasafiri*, 24 (2009), 1-2.
[16] Roemer, 'On Cheyette', p. 124.
[17] Françoise Lionnet, 'Counterpoint and Double Critique in Edward Said and Abdelkebir Khatibi: A Transcolonial Comparison', in *A Companion to Comparative Literature*, ed. by Ali Behdad and Dominic Thomas (Chichester: John Wiley & Sons, 2011), pp. 387-407 (p. 397).
[18] *Ibid*., p. 397.

apparent when it comes to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict (in the context of the current political impasse) and Arab-Jewish relations (in the face of rising anti-Semitism and Islamophobia), here depicted by North African writers of French. Moreover, the primary texts themselves refuse categorisation, mix genres, complicate theories, and challenge binary thinking which so often pervades the Arab-Israeli or Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

In their introduction to *The Cambridge Journal of Postcolonial Literary Inquiry* special issue on Jewish studies and postcolonialism, Goetschel and Quayson draw our attention to '[t]he invention of the notion of the Mizrahim (or Arab Jews)', used in Israel to refer to Jews from Arab countries across North Africa and the Middle East.[19] As Ya'ar Hevev notes in his translation of Amnon Raz-Krakotzkin's illuminating article 'Orientalism, Jewish Studies and Israeli Society: A Few Comments', Mizrahi literally means 'Easterner' or 'Oriental', and is 'the Hebrew term for Israeli Jews who immigrated from Arab or Muslim countries'.[20] This is in contrast to 'the term Ashkenazi [...] which in the Israeli context refers to Israeli Jews who immigrated from Europe, Russia or

[19] Goetschel and Quayson, 'Introduction: Jewish Studies and Postcolonialism', p. 6.

[20] Amnon Raz-Krakotzkin, 'Orientalism, Jewish Studies and Israeli Society: A Few Comments', *Philological Encounters*, 2, trans. by Ya'ar Hever (2017), 237-69 (p. 237).

America'.[21] Hevev goes on to explain that '[t]he dichotomy Mizrahi/Ashkenazi is founded upon the traditional one between Sephardic and Ashkenazi Jews, i.e., those who follow the traditions constituted in Spain and in Germany, respectively'.[22] While the Sephardi/Ashkenazi dichotomy remains the one typically used in France and Francophone North Africa,[23] the Mizrahi/Ashkenazi dichotomy is current in Israel. Raz-Krakotzkin writes that '[t]he dichotomous definition of the relation between "West" and "East," [in Israel] and the total identification with the West, was carried out to such an extent that the expression "Arab Jew" was perceived as a contradiction in terms'.[24] Therefore, it is perhaps unsurprising that Orientalism is at work, in the light of the fact that the designation 'Mizrahim' means 'Orientals'. As Raz-Krakotzkin notes, '[t]he Orientalist aspect of Israeli society was expressed most clearly in the attitude towards Mizrahim [Orientals]: it created the basis of their social exclusion and, in particular, the denial of their [Arab] culture'.[25]

The Arab/Berber and Sephardi/Mizrahi Jewish writers analysed in this thesis complicate the Arab-Jew binary and challenge

[21] Raz-Krakotzkin, 'Orientalism, Jewish Studies and Israeli Society', p. 237.
[22] *Ibid.*
[23] See Jean-Christophe Attias and Esther Benbassa, *Les Juifs ont-ils un avenir?* (Paris: Hachette, 2002 [2001]), pp. 15, 93-94, 120.
[24] Raz-Krakotzkin, 'Orientalism, Jewish Studies and Israeli Society', p. 261.
[25] *Ibid*., p. 259.

the categorisation of Arabs and Jews not only in Israel but also in France, Algeria, and Tunisia, in their inclusion of Amazigh/Berber, Bedouin, Arab-Jewish, and Arab Israeli identities.[26] The Mizrahi (or Arab-Jew) is one of the identities which will be explored in the course of this thesis, as it is a re-emerging figure in the texts studied here, and has been theorised by Memmi and Shohat, albeit in differing ways. The Arab Jews of North Africa have been and sometimes still are conflated with *pied-noirs* as well as with Zionists, each of which can be cast as colonialist (indeed, *pied-noirs,* as European settlers, are indisputably so). It is therefore important to distinguish between indigenous Maghrebi Jews with French citizenship from European settlers and their descendents, while also challenging the sweeping statement that Zionism is colonialism.

[26] Bruce Maddy-Weiztman writes that, '[t]oday, the term [Berber] is viewed by many Berbers as pejorative and, as their modern ethnonational consciousness deepens, is increasingly being supplanted by "Amazigh" [...] lit. "free man"'. Bruce Maddy-Weitzman, *Berber Identity Movement and the Challenge to North African Studies* (Texas: University of Texas Press, 2011), p. 2. See also Fazia Aïtel, *We Are Imazighen: The Development of Algerian Berber Identity in Twentieth-Century Literature and Culture* (Florida: University of Florida Press, 2014), pp. 9-15. In my interview with him, Benaïssa declared, 'On ne connaît pas l'origine du mot « berbère ». Pour certains, ça vient du latin « barbare », et dans l'antiquité, la « Berbérie » c'était l'Afrique pour les Romains. Donc le mot est resté, les berbères, ce sont les habitants de la « Berbérie », de l'Afrique. Amazigh signifie « homme libre » en langue berbère, c'est-à-dire l'homme tout simplement, donc nous sommes des Amazighs, des hommes libres'. Slimane Benaïssa qtd. in Rebekah Vince, '"Je commence là où ça se tait": An Interview with Slimane Benaïssa', *Bulletin of Francophone Postcolonial Studies*, 9.1 (2018), 2-10 (p. 6).

Indeed, Zionism may resemble colonialism (notably in settlement and occupation), but also contains aspects of anti-colonialism (as an independence movement), as well as post-colonialism, considering that the State of Israel was founded following Ottoman imperial and British colonial rule. As Katz, Leff, and Mandel note, 'Jews and colonialism frequently became reduced to polemics over Zionism, flattening the issue rather than taking account of its nuances'.[27] In an essay published in 2006 and reprinted in Katz, Leff, and Mandel's co-edited volume *Colonialism and the Jews* in 2017, Derek J. Penslar acknowledges the 'linkages between Zionism and colonialism' but does not unambiguously see Zionism as a form of colonialism or equate the two.[28] More specifically, he identifies two problems when it comes to 'the discussion on the relationship between Zionism and colonialism'.[29] The first is to 'establish complete congruence or total separation between the two phenomena', as can be seen in arguments for equation or singularity/uniqueness.[30] The second is 'the failure to include additional categories of analysis such as anticolonialism (Zionism as

[27] Katz, Leff, and Mandel, 'Introduction: Engaging Colonial History and Jewish History', in *Colonialism and the Jews*, pp. 1-25 (p. 2). See also Cheyette, 'Against Supersessionist Thinking', p. 425.
[28] Derek J. Penslar, 'Is Zionism a Colonial Movement?', in *Colonialism and the Jews*, pp. 275-300 (p. 275). See also an earlier version of this essay: Derek J. Penslar, 'Zionism, Colonialism and Postcolonialism', *Journal of Israeli History*, 20 (2001), 84-98.
[29] Penslar, 'Is Zionism a Colonial Movement?', p. 276.
[30] *Ibid*.

an act of resistance by a colonized people) and postcolonialism (the Zionist project as akin to state-building projects throughout twentieth-century Asia and Africa)'.[31] Instead, Penslar argues that 'the Zionist project was historically and conceptually situated *between* colonial, anticolonial and postcolonial discourse and practice'.[32] Building on the earlier argument of the in-betweenness of Zionism, in the specific framework of a critical reappraisal of the place of Jews within orientalist discourse and postcolonial critique of orientalism, Kalmar and Penslar write that

> [on the one hand,] the link between Zionism and colonialism is undeniable. On the other hand, there is more to Zionism than that: it has also been a response to racist discrimination, and the discrimination has often been expressed in orientalist terms.[33]

There is a difference, therefore, between seeing Zionism as a form of colonialism and seeing forms of colonialism in (forms of) Zionism. This is explored in the thesis through the *mission civilisatrice* of the 'New Jew' in chapter one, the concept of the *pied-noir* Zionist in chapter two, Haddad's nuanced

[31] *Ibid.*
[32] *Ibid*., emphasis mine. The idea of in-betweenness – between East and West, between Arab and Jew, between Israeli and Palestinian – is a recurrent one in this thesis.
[33] Kalmar and Penslar, 'Orientalism and the Jews: An Introduction', p. xv.

description of Zionism in chapter three, and the depiction of Palestinian refugees as the new 'damnés de la terre' in chapter four. While Olivia Harrison's book *Transcolonial Maghreb: Imagining Palestine in an Era of Decolonization* (2015) is an important theoretical contribution, this thesis is more about transcultural memories, plural identities, and 'dialogic memory'[34] (as depicted in the primary texts) than it is about drawing parallels between French colonialism and Zionism. Moreover, this thesis does not concern itself with analysing transnational solidarity movements in the name of anti-colonialism, as this presupposes that Israel is unambiguously a (neo-)colonial state, which is not a position taken by the authors studied here or indeed by the author of this thesis.

My focus is on Algeria and Tunisia, due to their special relationship with Palestine. Morocco falls out of the remit of this thesis, as its relationship to Israel is less antagonistic. It is significant to note that the exiled Palestine Liberation Organization found refuge in Tunis between 1982 and 1994. In 1988, the Palestinian National Council (the legislative body of the Palestine Liberation Organization) met in Algiers where they declared an independent State of Palestine to include the West Bank, the Gaza Strip, and the contentious East Jerusalem (considered

[34] See Assmann, 'Dialogic Memory', pp. 199-214, particularly pp. 210-11; and Assmann, 'From Collective Violence to a Common Future', pp. 8-22, particularly pp. 17-21.

occupied under international law since 1967, when Israel claims to have annexed it). In *Transcolonial Maghreb*, Harrison writes that 'Algeria is the only Maghrebi nation-state that unambiguously asserts its anti-Zionism'.[35] Indeed, Algeria does not recognise the State of Israel and refuses entry to holders of Israeli passports. Algerian popular solidarity with the Palestinian cause is notably expressed at football matches, by fans and footballers alike.[36] More broadly, comparisons have been made between Algerian resistance to French colonial rule and Palestinian resistance to Zionism, often equated with colonialism. Yet there are a number of Arab/Berber Algerian writers who, while recognising contemporary structural violence against Palestinians and resemblances between colonialism and Zionism, are open to dialogue within and outside of their literary works, adopting a more nuanced approach. They take into account the long and relatively peaceful coexistence between Berbers/Amazighs, Jews, and Arabs in the Maghreb, the interrelated traumatic legacies of the Shoah and colonialism which form the backdrop of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, and the possibility

[35] Olivia Harrison, *Transcolonial Maghreb: Imagining Palestine in the Era of Decolonization* (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 2015), p. 6.

[36] In the context of the 2014 Gaza War, the Algerian football team donated their prize money to 'the people in Gaza'. See The Huffington Post UK, 'Algeria To Donate World Cup Prize Money To Gaza', *Huffington Post*, 3 July 2014, <http://www.huffingtonpost.co.uk/2014/07/03/algeria-to-donate-world-cup-money-gaza_n_5554643.html> [accessed 26 February 2018].

of a two-state solution premised on equal rights, mutual recognition, and social justice. These include Yasmina Khadra, Slimane Benaïssa, and Boualem Sansal, three Algerian writers who are together dubbed 'enfants de l'amertume', notably in relation to their experiences of the Black Decade in Algeria (1991-2002), which overshadows their writing, including when it comes to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.[37] Sansal has not written explicitly on this conflict, so will not feature in what follows, but I mention him here, as it is worth noting his dialogic work with left-wing Israeli author and peace activist David Grossman.[38] Moreover, his visit to Israel in 2012 resulted in the temporary revocation of the Arab Prize for Literature, which shows how controversial a dialogic approach can be when the official line of the Arab League is to boycott Israel.[39]

[37] Aude Lancelin, 'Boualem Sansal, Yasmina Khadra, Slimane Benaïssa... les enfants de l'amertume', *Bibliobs*, 2 September 1999, <http://bibliobs.nouvelobs.com/romans/19990902.BIB0595/boualem-sansal-yasmina-khadra-slimane-benaissa-les-enfants-de-l-039-amertume.html> [accessed 10 February 2016].

[38] See Grégoire Leménager, 'Boualem Sansal et David Grossman lancent une ONU des écrivains', *Nouvelobs – Bibliobs*, 8 October 2012, <http://bibliobs.nouvelobs.com/actualites/20121008.OBS4906/boualem-sansal-et-david-grossman-lancent-une-onu-des-ecrivains.html> [accessed 22 February 2016].

[39] See Hélé Béji, 'Boualem Sansal privé du Prix du roman arabe', *Le Monde*, 15 June 2012, <http://www.lemonde.fr/idees/article/2012/06/15/boualem-sansal-prive-du-prix-du-roman-arabe_1719231_3232.html> [accessed 22 February 2016]; and Sefy Hendler, 'From Algeria With Love', *Haaretz*, 4 October 2012, <https://www.haaretz.com/the-algerian-who-dared-to-like-israel-1.5176053> [accessed 26 February 2018].

Narratives of the Shoah and Colonialism

Literary critic Anna Bernard begins her book *Rhetorics of Belonging: Israel/Palestine, Nation and Narration* (2013) with a quotation from Said's essay 'Nationalism, Human Rights, and Interpretation' (1993).[40] Identifying himself with the 'us' of Arab Palestinians, Said writes:

> I doubt that any of us has figured out how our particularly trying history interlocks with that of the Jews who dispossessed and now try to rule us. But we know these histories cannot be separated, and that the Western liberal who tries to do so violates, rather than comprehends, both.[41]

It is important to note that Said is not talking about History with a capital 'H' here, but rather multiple histories, of which Palestinian ('our') and Jewish, themselves heterogeneous and overlapping rather than monolithic. The translation of 'histories' in French (*histoires*) can refer both to histories and to stories, that is to say narratives, which fits with the title of Bernard's book. Despite its polarised depiction in the media and to some extent in

[40] See Edward Said, 'Nationalism, Human Rights, and Interpretation', in *Reflections on Exile and Other Literary and Cultural Essays*, ed. by (London: Granta, 2000) (first publ. in *Raritan*, 12 (1993), 26-51).

[41] Edward Said qtd. in Anna Bernard, *Rhetorics of Belonging: Nation, Narration, and Israel/Palestine* (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2013), p. 1.

academia, it is self-evident that the Israeli-Palestinian conflict is far more complicated than a two-sided debate (and of course there is both overlap and dissidence across and within these so-called 'sides'). My argument is in line with Bernard's insomuch as it 'question[s] the tendency in contemporary criticism to dismiss ideas that we think we "already know," particularly the idea that the conflict is a confrontation between "two narratives," […] a form of political shorthand that tells us little about the work of actual literary narratives'.[42] As Goetschel and Quayson remind us, 'history is not what is past but what we make of it', that is, through narrative.[43] Here it is also important to note that, as Roemer writes, '[m]emory and history are intertwined. They are not binaries and exist in their mutual confluence'.[44] This is particularly the case in the ongoing Israeli-Palestinian conflict, where memories of the Shoah, colonialism, the Israeli War of Independence, and the Palestinian Nakba, are intertwined.

Goetschel and Quayson go on to write that, '[a]lthough the imperative to contemplate history should not be forgotten, this contemplation can remain viable only if reconsidered in the larger context of a more comprehensive imperative to remember "in difference," in other words, with the

[42] Bernard, *Rhetorics of Belonging*, p. 14.
[43] Goetschel and Quayson, 'Introduction: Jewish Studies and Postcolonialism', p. 2.
[44] Roemer, 'On Cheyette', p. 126.

commitment to attend to the different singularities each case presents'.[45] This remembering 'in difference', which I would argue translates into what Rothberg defines as 'differentiated solidarity',[46] is key when considering the historical backdrop and collective memory of colonialism, the Shoah, and the Nakba which underpin the Israeli-Palestinian conflict as explored in the literary texts herein. Referring to this conflict and drawing from Rothberg, Goetschel and Quayson note that

> memory need not be competitive in asking who has suffered most. Rather, memory is multidirectional. Opening up memory in this way allows us to think of the Shoah and the Nakba side by side in order to allow them to illuminate each other.[47]

In a follow-up article to his influential book *Multidirectional Memory*, Rothberg argues that, particularly in the case of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, 'memory discourses expressing a differentiated solidarity offer a greater political potential than those [...] that subsume different histories under a logic of equation or that set victims against each other in an antagonistic logic of competition'.[48] My thesis arises from a conviction that recent

[45] Goetschel and Quayson, 'Introduction: Jewish Studies and Postcolonialism', p. 3.
[46] See Rothberg, 'From Gaza to Warsaw', p. 526.
[47] Goetschel and Quayson, 'Introduction: Jewish Studies and Postcolonialism', pp. 3-4.
[48] Rothberg, 'From Gaza to Warsaw', p. 526.

literary works from North African writers, including autobiographical narratives, *récits*, novels, and plays, can lead to a deeper understanding of the complexity of the conflict. This in turn can lead to a meaningful empathy and ethical response towards all involved, as opposed to the violation which might arise from their separation through antagonistic binaries such as Arab versus Jew and Israeli versus Palestinian.[49]

In his seminal book *Postcolonial Witnessing: Trauma Out of Bounds* (2013), Stef Craps highlights the 'Eurocentric biases' of trauma theory, a theory which began to develop in the 1990s 'as a product of the so-called ethical turn'.[50] Craps argues that the foundational texts, including Cathy Caruth's influential *Unclaimed Experience: Trauma, Narrative, and History* (1996), fail to live up to their claim of promoting 'cross-cultural solidarity'[51] in the following areas:

> [1] they marginalize or ignore traumatic experiences of non-Western

[49] On the reader as 'ethical respondent', see Gillian Whitlock, 'In the Second Person: Narrative Transactions in Stolen Generations Testimony', *Biography*, 24 (2001), 197-214, particularly pp. 205, 208, 211.

[50] Stef Craps, *Postcolonial Witnessing: Trauma Out of Bounds* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008), pp. 2, 1. Craps writes that '[t]rauma theory's failure to give the sufferings of those belonging to non-Western or minority groups due recognition sits uneasily with the field's ethical aspirations'. Craps, *Postcolonial Witnessing*, p. 3.

[51] Here Craps is referring in particular to Caruth's claim that 'history is precisely the way we are implicated in each other's traumas' and 'trauma itself may provide the very link between cultures'. Cathy Caruth qtd. in Craps, *Postcolonial Witnessing*, p. 2.

> or minority cultures, [2] they tend to take for granted the universal validity of definitions of trauma and recovery that have developed out of the history of Western modernity, [3] they often favour or even prescribe a modernist aesthetic of fragmentation and aporia as uniquely suited to the task of bearing witness to trauma, and [4] they generally disregard the connections between metropolitan and non-Western or minority traumas.[52]

Craps goes on to emphasise the 'interrelatedness of memories of the Holocaust and colonial suffering'.[53] He describes how, until recently, the Shoah (persecution and extermination) and the consequences of colonialism (control and exploitation) were mostly examined in the two separate fields of Jewish studies and postcolonial studies,[54] fields in which Jewish and Arab writings can be situated. Craps names Aimé Césaire and Hannah Arendt among the few exceptions to this trend, while making reference to Frantz Fanon and Jean-Paul Sartre who were also influential in this debate.[55] In the words of Césaire, Hitler '[a]

[52] Craps, *Postcolonial Witnessing*, p. 2.
[53] *Ibid*., p. 81.
[54] In a subchapter entitled "Bridging the gap between Jewish and postcolonial studies", Craps speaks of 'the gaping disciplinary divide that has long separated Jewish and postcolonial studies, despite a host of shared concerns'. Craps, *Postcolonial Witnessing*, p. 81.
[55] For detailed analysis of Arendt's work in this context, see Cheyette, *Diasporas of the Mind*, pp. 6-18.

appliqué à l'Europe des procédés colonialistes dont ne relevaient jusqu'ici que les Arabes d'Algérie, les coolies de l'Inde et les nègres d'Afrique'.[56] According to Craps, it was Arendt who identified the 'inextricable interrelationship between the phenomena of anti-Semitism, imperialism, and totalitarianism'; Arendt's 'boomerang thesis' saw Nazism in Europe as rooted in colonialism outside of Europe.[57]

Craps fails to mention Memmi, another intellectual active at this time (and to this day), notably in examining the oppression of both Jews and colonised subjects, whom he describes as victims of 'les mêmes mécanismes, les mêmes schémas d'accusation, d'humiliation, de carences objectives'.[58] Although this suggests equation, Jews and colonised peoples being subject to the same oppression, Memmi is careful to highlight the specificity of each kind of 'homme dominé':

> J'ai beaucoup insisté [...] sur les ressemblances entre les diverses oppressions, ce qui autorise à parler de *L'Homme dominé*. Mais chaque figure incarnée de cet homme possède ses traits originaux. Et le portrait du Colonisé ne saurait dispenser de celui du Juif, ou de celui du Noir.[59]

[56] Aimé Césaire, *Discours sur le colonialisme* (Paris: Éditions Présence Africaine, 1955 [1950]), p. 88.
[57] Craps, *Postcolonial Witnessing*, p. 84.
[58] Memmi, *L'Homme dominé* (Paris: Gallimard, 1968), p. 104.
[59] *Ibid*., p. 117.

Indeed, he argues that an acknowledgement of this specificity is essential in the process of liberation: '*on ne peut proposer une libération efficace, si l'on n'a pas cerné la spécificité de chaque condition*'.[60] Memmi's *L'Homme dominé* (1968) opens with a translated quotation accredited to Theodore Herzl but which in fact Herzl took from Professor Steineck, Head of the Scientific Institute of the New Society: 'Je pense au problème africain: seul un Juif peut en comprendre toute la profondeur'.[61] Thus the link between Israel and Jewish oppression is made, which is a controversial one, as Palestinian oppression is also at stake here and arguably results from 'la libération du Juif', if this is achieved through the State of Israel as Memmi claims.[62] Indeed, according to Memmi, the State of Israel 'représente le résultat [...] de la libération du Juif, tout comme la décolonisation représente la libération des peuples arabes ou noirs d'Asie et d'Afrique'.[63] *La libération du Palestinien*, however, remains to be achieved. Penslar calls this 'the Zionist project's fundamental contradiction, between the liberation of one nation and the oppression of the other'.[64]

[60] *Ibid*., p. 117, original emphasis.
[61] *Ibid*., inside page.
[62] See Memmi, *La Libération du Juif* (Paris: Gallimard, 1966).
[63] Memmi, *L'Homme dominé*, p. 119.
[64] Derek J. Penslar, 'What We Talk About When We Talk About Colonialism: A Response to Joshua Cole and Elizabeth Thompson', in *Colonialism and the Jews*, pp. 327-40 (p. 327).

Apart from the few exceptions identified by Craps – notably Arendt and Césaire, to whom I would add Memmi while putting greater emphasis on Fanon and Sartre – it is only recently that the Shoah and colonialism, the Jew and the colonised subject, have been examined more thoroughly as interconnected rather than as within the two separate, often uncommunicating fields of Jewish and postcolonial studies.[65] However, an extensive study has not yet been undertaken of how the legacies of these two traumatic phenomena and the heritage of these two interrelated identities have affected the portrayal of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict in Francophone North African literature. Moreover, although Craps' work goes a long way in fulfilling its aim to bridge the gap between Jewish and postcolonial studies, specifically by examining the interconnectedness of the traumatic phenomena of genocide and colonialism, it does not refer to the Jewish exodus from Arab countries, nor does it address the Palestinian refugee crisis resulting from the Nakba. Furthermore, no reference is made to the

[65] Craps writes, '[t]his understanding of Nazism as colonialism revisited on Europe [...] informs more recent research in the fledgling field of comparative genocide studies by scholars such as Mark Mazower, A. Dirk Moses, David Moshman, Jacques Semelin, Timothy Snyder, Dan Stone, and Jürgen Zimmerer, who have all sought to remove the "conceptual blockages" (Moses) in comparing modern atrocities, to move beyond notions of the Holocaust's uniqueness that might inscribe a hierarchy of suffering across modernity, and to elicit the structural continuities and discontinuities between atrocious events'. Craps, *Postcolonial Witnessing*, p. 84.

imperialist nature of the Arab conquest across the Mediterranean, nor to the dispossession, pogroms, and *dhimmitude* (servitude) to which Jews were periodically subjected under Islamic rule, both before and after French colonisation. There is a risk here of falling into what Rothberg terms 'competitive memory',[66] but if the right balance is struck, these narratives can be read in parallel with one another to gain a more complete picture of the historical and memorial backdrop to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

The tendency to interchange Israeli-Palestinian with Arab-Israeli when referring to the conflict suggests the involvement of an Arab community which transcends that of the Palestinians both within and outside of the disputed territories. However, it is also important to note that while Palestinians historically are indigenous Arabs, modern-day Israelis are not necessarily Jews (though some are, historically, indigenous ones).[67] Moreover, Jews living under the Ottoman Empire and in British Mandate Palestine commonly identified themselves as Palestinians, and approximately 20% of modern-day Israelis are Arabs, some of whom self-identify as Palestinians with Israeli passports. As Gil Z. Hochberg points out in *In Spite of Partition: Jews, Arabs, and the Limits of the Separatist Imagination*,

[66] See Rothberg, *Multidirectional Memory*, pp. 5, 9.
[67] See Attias and Benbassa, *Les Juifs ont-ils un avenir?*, pp. 189, 193.

> the membership categories "Israeli" and "Palestinian," when not accompanied by the ethnic/religious markers "Jewish" and "Arab," hide the complexities existing behind them, that is, the fact that there are Palestinian Israelis and that there are also Jews in Israel, born before 1948, who continue to identity as "Palestinian Jews".[68]

Furthermore, at the risk of stating the obvious, neither Jews nor Israelis are necessarily Zionist in the political sense, though it was through socialist Zionism, following theological Zionism and accelerated after the Shoah, that the state of Israel was founded as a Jewish-majority democracy (at least that was the aim or claim). Thus naming the current conflict Arab-Israeli as opposed to Israeli-Palestinian is misleading, not least of all due to the fact that some Arab countries are Israel's allies in their fight against Shiite Iran. It is also important to note that not all Israelis and Palestinians are in conflict with one another. The overwhelming majority seek peace and there is (albeit precarious) security cooperation between Israel and the Palestinian Authority, whose official position is to pursue a two-state solution, though the PA's cooperation is seen as collaboration – even betrayal – by some Palestinians, and many doubt Israel's commitment to this vision of

[68] Gil Z. Hochberg, *In Spite of Partition: Jews, Arabs, and the Limits of Separatist Imagination* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2007), p. 144, n. 6.

two states in the face of ongoing settlement-building in the West Bank.

The French Connection

The focus on writing in French in particular adds another dimension to the debate's rhetoric, not least because of French and Francophone historical influences and semantic fields (*occupation*, *résistance*, *colonisation*), and France's current political stance as one of the European countries which acts most in favour of Palestinian statehood 'recognition'.[69] Thus, while in *Rhetorics of Belonging*, Bernard's 'analysis is […] specific to an Anglophone context of reception', mine relates to a Francophone one. As Bernard notes,

> [t]he "worldliness" of Palestinian and Israeli texts might look different in Germanophone or Francophone metropolitan contexts, where specific local dynamics influence their reception, including collective memories of the Nazi and Vichy regimes, domestic tensions between Muslim and non-Muslim populations,

[69] See François Hollande's manifesto, and France's vote on UN observer and UNESCO World Heritage status of Palestine, and the religious sites in Bethlehem and Hebron, respectively. For the significance of World Heritage sites for the Palestinian cause, see Chiara De Cesari, 'World Heritage and the Nation-State: A View from Palestine', *Transnational Memory: Circulation, Articulation, Scales* ed. by Chiara De Cesari and Ann Rigney (Berlin; Boston: De Gruyter, 2014), pp. 247-70.

> and local histories of international solidarity activism and organized left politics.[70]

In *Israeli-Palestinian Conflict in the Francophone World* (2010), Nathalie Debrauwere-Miller puts forward a case for the particularity of the Francophone connection to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, highlighting the fact that 'France has the largest Jewish and Muslim communities in Europe' and that Francophone North Africans in particular are 'directly impacted and concerned by the Middle East conflict'.[71] France's history is caught up in that of Palestine/Israel, from the Dreyfus Affair, leading to the revival of Zionism under Herzl, to François Hollande's call for international recognition for a Palestinian state (2012); from the Paris Peace Conference (1919) to the Evian Accords (1962); from Jewish emigration following the Toulouse shootings (2012) and the Porte de Vincennes siege (2015) to the conference for peace in the Middle East in Paris (2017).

In the Francophone context, parallels are sometimes drawn between how Algerians were treated under French colonial rule from 1830 until the Algerian War of Independence (1954-1962), which led to Algerian independence and *pied noir* exile/return to

[70] Bernard, *Rhetorics of Belonging*, p. 6.
[71] Nathalie Debrauwere-Miller, 'Introduction: France and the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict', in *Israeli-Palestinian Conflict in the Francophone World*, ed. by Nathalie Debrauwere-Miller (New York: Routledge, 2010), pp. 1, 18, n. 1.

France, and Israel's relationship to the Palestinians, from the Israeli War of Independence (Nakba) to present-day occupation. For many, the Israeli settlers, translated in French as *colons* – a term which encompasses both settler and coloniser – recall settler colonialism in Algeria. This comparison is problematic for a number of reasons. Firstly, *pied-noir* residents of Algeria had European heritage and citizenship, and so (theoretically at least) could be easily absorbed into metropolitan France under its legal protection upon return there. Jews also, including those who had lived in Algeria for two thousand years, had been granted French citizenship under the Crémieux Decree in 1870.[72] Exiled Palestinians, meanwhile, were not absorbed into neighbouring Arab countries, and were often treated, as their descendants continue to be, as second-class citizens. Moreover, as Debrauwere-Miller points out, Jews in Algeria had effectively been treated as 'second-class individuals' before French colonial rule, as demonstrated by the 'payment of a special tax, the *giziya*, and the renunciation of political activity in exchange for Islamic protection'.[73] Secondly,

[72] For an analysis of Jewish status and citizenship in Algeria, see Debrauwere-Miller, 'Introduction: France and the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict', pp. 3-4. See also Sarah Abrevaya Stein, 'Algeria's Jewish Past-Present', *Jadaliyya*, 11 September 2014, <http://www.jadaliyya.com/pages/index/19205/algeria%E2%80%99s-jewish-past-present> [accessed 9 March 2016].

[73] Debrauwere-Miller, 'Introduction: France and the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict', p. 20, n. 15.

while France is beginning to acknowledge that its narrative of the Algerian War was euphemised and dishonest, the narratives of the Israeli War of Independence and the Nakba remain opposed and conflicted. As Hochberg writes,

> the so-called battle of memories between the Israeli-Jewish collective memory and the collective memory of the Palestinian people [...] has been portrayed as taking place between two competing and negating traumatic memories: the memory of anti-Semitism culminating in the Holocaust and the memory of colonial occupation culminating in the Nakbah.[74]

It is worth noting the use of the term 'colonial occupation' next to 'anti-Semitism' in Hochberg's analysis. Indeed, the historical junctures of (Nazi) occupation and resistance set France apart from the UK and US in terms of reception of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, as does its colonial intervention in North Africa. Meanwhile, the invocation of narratives of occupation and resistance join the 'palimpsestic' memory of Nazi round-ups in occupied France and the 17 October 1961 massacre in Paris as well as resistance to the imperial occupation of Algeria.[75]

It is important, therefore, to bear in mind the context of genocidal history on the

[74] Hochberg, *In Spite of Partition*, p. 19.
[75] Silverman, *Palimpsestic Memory*, pp. 3, 32 (n. 15).

one hand, and of colonialism on the other, when analysing the Israeli-Palestinian conflict as explored in Francophone North African texts. As Lucille Cairns writes:

> Colonialism, as well as being a charge currently levelled against Israel, was in its British avatar the pre-history without which the current Israeli-Palestinian conflict may well not have arisen; and the post-history of French colonialism has produced the pro-Arab stance of the Fifth Republic that increasingly alienates French Jews.[76]

Thus the legacy of France's imperialist mission across the Mediterranean, which involved occupation and culminated in decolonisation, is crucial in understanding France's relation to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. While Algeria was annexed and occupied by France (1830-1962), Tunisia and Morocco were under French protectorates (1881-1956 and 1912-1956, respectively), and Syria was under French mandate (1923-1943). In *Livret de colonisation*, published in 1896, Joseph Chailley-Bert laid out the two forms of colonisation in which France was engaged as 'colonies de peuplement' and 'colonies d'exploitation'.[77] The former involved settling the land while the purpose of the latter was

[76] Lucille Cairns, 'Righteous Realism Versus Postmodern Play: The Israeli-Palestinian Conflict in Female-Authored French Fiction', p. 82.

[77] Joseph Chailley-Bert, *Livret de colonisation. Opuscule du maître* (Paris: Armand Colin, 1896), pp. 18-19.

not only 'civiliser des hommes au lieu de cultiver des territoires' as Chailley-Bert contends, but also to exploit the indigenous population and rob them of natural resources.[78] As Penslar notes, '[m]odern European colonialism frequently involved the expropriation of native lands' – that is 'settlement colonialism [...] usually sanctioned by a sovereign state' – and 'the exploitation of native labor for the economic benefit of the metropole'.[79]

France's colonial past must also be related more specifically to the mandates of Palestine and Syria, and to the claim of neo-colonialism in modern-day Israel (both in terms of settlements and perceivably 'cultivating' its Arab citizens). This accusation was prefigured by General Charles de Gaulle's famous speech regarding the Six-Day War of 1967: '[Israël] organise, sur les territoires qu'il a pris l'occupation qui ne peut aller sans oppression, répression, expulsion et s'il manifeste contre lui la résistance qu'à son tour il qualifie de terrorisme'.[80] As Andrada

[78] *Ibid.*

[79] Penslar, 'Zionism, Colonialism and Postcolonialism', p. 85. See also, Penslar, 'Is Zionism a Colonial Movement?', p. 277. Penslar summarises modern colonialism as 'the geopolitical system in which for several centuries a handful of Western powers controlled, directly or indirectly, much of the earth's population and resources'. Penslar, 'What We Talk About When We Talk About Colonialism', pp. 327-28.

[80] Charles de Gaulle, 'Conférence de presse du 27 novembre 1967', *Institut national de l'audiovisuel*, <http://fresques.ina.fr/de-gaulle/liste/recherche/themes/ll/colonisation%20et%20d%C3%A9colonisation?video=Gaulle00043#sort/DateAffichage/direction/ASC/page/18/size/10> [accessed 22 February 2016].

Viorica Crețanu writes in her commentary and analysis of the speech, 'selon de Gaulle, Israël est devenu un Etat conquérant, qui exercise son pouvoir coercitif sur les territoires qu'il avait occupés lors du combat'.[81] She claims that 'les paroles de de Gaulle nous laissent l'impression qu'il parle de ses propres actions entreprises en Algérie qu'il regrette maintenant: l'occupation, la violence, la résistance des algériens'.[82] I would instead argue that de Gaulle is distancing himself here from such practices of colonisation; rather he is positioning himself at the forefront of resistance in France against the Vichy regime and as a pioneer of decolonisation in Algeria, having 'granted' the Algerians their own independent state in the Evian Accords (18 March 1962).[83] De Gaulle suggests that France is willing to cooperate with the Palestinians in order to also 'give' them the independent state they 'deserve', in line with the *prétendu* 'friendly' politics towards Arab countries following Algerian decolonisation:

[81] Andrada Viorica Crețanu, 'Charles de Gaulle et le Moyen Orient après 1967: rhetorique et action' (unpublished master's thesis, University of Bucharest, 2014), p. 50.
[82] *Ibid.*
[83] In a speech in September 1959, de Gaulle stated that '[c]ompte tenu de toutes les données algériennes, nationales, internationales du problème; je considère comme nécessaire que ce recours à l'autodétermination soit proclamé aujourd'hui'. De Gaulle, 'L'allocution radio-télévisée prononcée au Palais de l'Elysée le 16 septembre 1959', *Institut national de l'audiovisuel*, <http://fresques.ina.fr/de-gaulle/liste/recherche/themes/ll/Colonisation%20et%20d%C3%A9colonisation?video=Gaulle00043#sort/DateAffichage/direction/ASC/page/7/size/10> [accessed 22 February 2016].

'une fois mis un terme à l'affaire algérienne, nous avions repris avec les peuples arabes d'Orient, la même politique d'amitié et de coopération qui avait été pendant des siècles celle de la France dans cette partie du monde'.[84] In any case there is no doubt that references to occupation and resistance recall France under the Vichy regime, as well as colonial Algeria. As Creţanu states:

> Ainsi, de Gaulle s'était rapporté aux événements de 1967 à travers une grille de lecture retraçant l'histoire franco-algérienne: l'occupation, l'immigration, la résistance, l'intervention des grandes puissances, l'évacuation des territoires occupés et la reconnaissance *de jure* et *de facto* du nouvel Etat indépendant.[85]

In making such references, de Gaulle positions Israel as the oppressive occupying force rather than as self-defending victim, and the Palestinians as resistant freedom fighters rather than terrorists (as they were perceived to be by Israel, in a similar way to how the French had previously seen the Front de libération nationale as terrorists).[86] De

[84] De Gaulle qtd. in Creţanu, 'Charles de Gaulle et le Moyen Orient après 1967: rhetorique et action', p. 44.
[85] Creţanu, 'Charles de Gaulle et le Moyen Orient après 1967: rhetorique et action', p. 47.
[86] 'Le Front de Libération Nationale était une faction nationaliste radicale qui, par la force armée, visait à conquérir l'indépendance de l'Algérie en construisant une véritable armée, sous le nom de l'Armée de Libération Nationale. Selon les autorités de Paris, les gens qui faisaient partie de cette armée étaient des terroristes qui devaient être chassés'. Creţanu, 'Charles

Gaulle's claim that Israel is the oppressor is in direct opposition to Memmi's argument that Israel was created for the Jews because they were an oppressed people, both in France under the Vichy regime and in North Africa (through *dhimmitude*, then under French colonial rule, and also following decolonisation when the majority of North African Jews no longer felt welcome in their native countries). Chouraqui echoes this sentiment when he writes that

> l'État d'Israël était prêt à recevoir les Juifs de la Diaspora qui ne pouvaient plus rester dans leur pays d'exil; c'était le cas pour les Juifs des pays arabes mis en demeure de quitter leur terre natale. C'était le cas aussi des Juifs européens, rescapés des camps de concentration.[87]

Yet, as we shall see in the first chapter, this welcome (back) to the ancient homeland was on the condition that diasporic Jews, whether Holocaust survivors or refugees from Arab countries, became 'new Jews'. According to the ambassador for the General Delegation of Palestine to the European Union, Leïla Shahid, France is faced with 'une confrontation ancrée dans l'histoire européenne par le génocide et le

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de Gaulle et le Moyen Orient après 1967: rhetorique et action', p. 50.

[87] André Chouraqui, *Lettre à un ami arabe* (Paris: Jean-Claude Lattès, 1994 [1969]), p. 164.

colonialisme'[88] in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, which raises the issue of historical foreign policy as well as contemporary domestic policy. The confrontation to which Shahid refers is reflected in texts on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict written by Francophone writers who have an affiliation with Jewish and/or Arab identity.

The Francophone Mediterranean

Rather than looking at texts in translation in French, I have chosen to narrow my focus to texts originally written in French, not least of all because of the interesting questions this choice of language raises, including the authors' relationship to the French language, and their intended audience. Zenatti somewhat problematically, though by no means exceptionally, shows France to be a kind of saviour and refuge in her novels, portraying French as the language of enlightenment and human rights. This is particularly evident in *Une bouteille dans la mer de Gaza* (2005), as well as in its film adaptation, *Une bouteille à la mer* (dir. by Thierry Binisti, 2011), in which a Palestinian teenager goes to Le centre culturel français de Gaza and eventually gets a scholarship to study in France.[89] Interestingly, Zenatti also wrote a piece for *Je est un autre:*

[88] Leïla Shahid, 'Entretien', *Revue internationale et stratégique*, 2 (2005), 37-44 (p. 38).
[89] The film is multilingual, including French, English, Arabic, and Hebrew, with subtitles in French.

Pour une identité-monde (2010), the lesser-studied sequel to *Pour une littérature-monde en français* (2007), a collection of essays eulogising the French language which has not escaped criticism.[90] *Je est un autre* takes issue with the concept of French national identity, and attempts to demonstrate through Francophone writers how identity can be transnational and transcultural, though the nation-state of France and the apparently unifying French language still remain central.

In a way which is not too dissimilar, the two-volume collection of essays *La Culture francophone en Israël* (2002), with a preface by Shimon Peres as well as one by Memmi, praises the French language and the figure of the French intellectual in particular. In his preface, 'Israël francophone', Memmi writes that '[l]e français est ma manière de penser l'universel'.[91] This Republican idea of universalism through the French language is embodied in the Alliance Israélite Universelle (AIU). The AIU was founded in 1860 as 'a Paris-based Jewish international humanitarian agency that, largely through a network of hundreds of schools educating thousands of

[90] Michel Le Bris and Jean Rouaud, eds. *Pour une littérature-monde en français* (Paris: Gallimard, 2007). For critical analysis of *Pour une littérature-monde en français*, see Charles Forsdick, Alec Hargreaves & David Murphy, eds. *Transnational French Studies: Postcolonialism and Littérature-Monde* (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2010). Michel Le Bris and Jean Rouaud, eds. *Je est un autre: Pour une identité-monde* (Paris: Gallimard, 2010). Valérie Zenatti, 'Entre-deux', in *Je est un autre*, pp. 109-14.

[91] Albert Memmi, 'Israël francophone', in *La Culture francophone en Israël*, ed. by David Mendelson (Paris: L'Harmattan, 2002), pp. 21-27 (p. 24).

mostly Jewish students in North Africa, the Levant, and the Balkans, sought to spread French language, culture and values to much of world Jewry'.[92] In his preface, Memmi speaks of his 'dette [...] envers l'Alliance Israélite Universelle qui, par l'intermédiaire du français, nous a familiarisé avec les progrès libérateurs de l'Occident'.[93] He writes that it was through the French language that he gained access to 'la rationalité, c'est-à-dire à la liberté, intellectuelle',[94] and describes French as 'la langue de l'homme raisonnable et rationnel, [...] la langue du citoyen discipliné mais sourcilleux d'un pays démocratique'.[95] In speaking of the French language as one of reason, liberty, and democracy, Memmi recalls the European humanist Enlightenment or Age of Reason. His references to progress and liberation from the West through French are reminiscent of colonial language, and yet he is well-known for his anti-colonial writings, notably *Portrait*

[92] Ethan B. Katz, 'Crémieux's Children: Joseph Reinach, Léon Blum, and René Cassin as Jews of French Empire', in *Colonialism and the Jews*, pp. 129-65 (p. 159, n. 9). According to their website, the AIU was '[f]ondée à Paris en 1860 pour se consacrer à la défense des juifs et à la promotion des droits de l'homme, l'Alliance israélite universelle s'est transformée, avec les années, en une entreprise éducative puissante qui a révolutionné le monde juif et marqué celui de la francophonie'. 'Alliance israélite universelle', 2013, <http://www.aiu.org/fr/alliance-israelite-universelle> [accessed 9 February 2016]. See André Kasp, ed., *Histoire de l'Alliance israélite universelle, de 1860 à nos jours* (Paris: Armand Colin, 2010). The AIU was established in Ottoman Palestine in 1870.

[93] Memmi, 'Israël francophone', p. 23.

[94] *Ibid*., pp. 23-24.

[95] *Ibid*., p. 24.

du colonisé, précédé du portrait du colonisateur (1957), which can be read alongside Frantz Fanon's *Les Damnés de la terre* (1961).[96] Both of these works include a preface by French intellectual and anti-colonialist writer Sartre, though the latter was removed by Fanon's widow following Sartre's perceived Zionist sympathies following the Six-Day War of 1967.[97]

[96] For an analysis of Fanon and Memmi's depictions of the Jew and the colonised in Algeria and Tunisia, see Cheyette, *Diasporas of the Mind*, pp. 46-54. Cheyette writes that 'the indeterminate figure of "the Jew" became an essential self-image that Fanon both resisted and incorporated into his understanding of colonial racism'. He also writes of Fanon's relation to Césaire: 'the history of fascisms and Nazi anti-Semitism acted as an essential point of reference on which Fanon was especially influenced by his comrade and teacher Aimé Césaire. At the same time, Fanon distanced himself from his secret sharer, the diasporic cosmopolitan Jew, who does not always fit into Césaire's narrative of a colonizing European fascism'. Cheyette, *Diasporas of the Mind*, p. 53. For an in-depth comparison of Fanon and Césaire, see Cheyette, *Diasporas of the Mind*, pp. 54-61.

[97] According to Cheyette, 'it was because of Sartre's support of Israel after the 1967 Six-Day War that Josie Fanon wished to publish *The Wretched of the Earth* without Sartre's preface and, in so doing, make clear her husband's posthumous distance from the supposed taint of "Zionism" which had already been levelled at Fanon'. Cheyette, *Diasporas of the Mind*, p. 53. As Cheyette writes earlier on in his chapter on Fanon, Césaire, and Memmi, 'Fanon was denounced by Memmi's acquaintance Dr Ben Soltan as a "Zionist"' and he was accused of being 'an Israeli spy'. Cheyette, *Diasporas of the Mind*, pp. 48-49. Cheyette draws the reader's attention to David Macey, *Frantz Fanon: A Life* (London: Granta, 2000), pp. 466-68. Incidentally, Memmi's *Le Portrait d'un Juif* (Paris: Gallimard, 1962), *La Libération du Juif* (Paris: Gallimard, 1966) can be read alongside Jean-Paul Sartre's *Réflexions sur la question juive* (1954 [1946]). For example, Cheyette writes of how 'Memmi distances himself from Sartre's conception of "the Jew" as a product of anti-Semitism'. Cheyette, *Diasporas of the Mind*, p. 270, note 25. For a comparative reading of Frantz Fanon's *Peau noire, masques blancs* (Paris: Seuil, 1952) and Sartre's *Réflexions sur la question juive*, see Cheyette, *Diasporas of the Mind*, pp. 61-71.

In his preface to *La Culture francophone en Israël*, 'Israël, la France et la Francophonie', Peres claims that 'personne ne peut se considérer comme un intellectuel [...] s'il n'a jamais respiré le parfum de l'esprit intellectuel français'.[98] This spirit is embodied by (a predominately male) 'élite littéraire' which can be traced from Marcel Proust – who Peres identifies as 'l'un des premiers à s'engager dans l'Affaire Dreyfus' alongside Émile Zola – to Albert Camus and Sartre. Nadia Malinovich writes that, 'the [Dreyfus] affair gave birth to the "intellectual" as a distinct social category in France'; 'it was in the early heated debates between Dreyfusards and anti-Dreyfusards that the term first came into use to describe the group of people who signed Zola's letter *J'accuse*' (1898).[99] In the

[98] Shimon Peres, 'Israël, la France et la Francophonie', in *La Culture francophone en Israël*, ed. by David Mendelson (Paris: L'Harmattan, 2002), pp. 7-20 (p. 10).

[99] Nadia Malinovich, *French and Jewish: Culture and the Politics of Identity in Early Twentieth-Century France* (Oxford: Littman Library of Jewish Civilization, 2008), p. 28. Of course, this is an *idée recue*; the emergence of the intellectual pre-dated the Dreyfus Affair, which was one factor among many in the establishment of this public figure in the context of the literary avant-garde movement and other sociopolitical factors at the *fin-de-siècle*. As Venita Datta convincingly argues: 'The Affair has become a *lieu de mémoire*, enshrined in national collective memory, and the beginnings of the intellectual have consequently been veiled in a myth of origins. Although it is true that the term "intellectual" as a noun gained widespread usage during the Affair, the birth of the intellectual and the subsequent establishment of intellectuals as national icons cannot be examined with the context of the Dreyfus Affair alone'. Venita Datta, *Birth of a National Icon: The Literary Avant-Garde and the Origins of the Intellectual in France* (New York: State University of New York Press, 1999), p. 1. See also pp. 17-18, 40, 206-10.

context of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, Michael Keren notes that, '[w]hile intellectuals engaged in public advocacy long before the term "public intellectual" was coined, it was largely Emile Zola's cry "J'accuse" during the Dreyfus Affair in late nineteenth-century France that gave rise to the expectation that intellectuals "speak truth to power"'.[100] More recently, Camus and Sartre, though not escaping criticism, have been hailed as intellectuals influential in anti-colonialism and anti-fascism in the Francophone world, as well as in the formation of Jewish and North African identity politics, notably in their engagement with Memmi.[101]

To return to Peres' preface to *La Culture francophone en Israël*, the Israeli diplomat speaks of the French language as 'une langue intérmediare [...] [qui] peut jouer un rôle utile si elle fait progresser le dialogue', as 'la langue des pays européens et méditerranéens entièrement ou partiellement francophones'.[102] It is through this language that the authors studied here become

[100] Michael Keren, 'No, Prime Minister: Public Intellectuals and Power in Israel', *Media International Australia*, 156 (2015), 79-88 (p. 79).
[101] See Albert Camus, *Lettres à un ami allemand* (Paris: Gallimard, 1948); and Sartre, *Réflexions sur la question juive*. See also Albert Camus, 'Préface', in *La Statue de sel* (Paris: Gallimard, 1966), pp. 9-10; and Jean-Paul Sartre, 'Préface', in Albert Memmi, *Portrait du colonisé, précédé de portrait du colonisateur* (Paris: Gallimard, 1985 [1957]), pp. 21-26. See also Farouk Mardam-Bey, 'French Intellectuals and the Palestine Question', *Journal of Palestine Studies*, 43 (2014), 26-39.
[102] Peres, 'Israël, la France et la Francophonie', p. 18.

intermediaries promoting dialogue to the French reader. However, the idea of the French language being somehow neutral or impartial is problematised in their texts, which demonstrate how it can be manipulated to serve various discourses. As Sansal asserts in his chapter for *Pour une littérature-monde*, 'la langue appartient à ceux qui la possèdent et l'utilisent'.[103] Similarly, Memmi writes in his preface to *La Culture francophone en Israël* that '[l]a langue française est [...] la langue du combat des idées'.[104] In this way, the French language becomes a 'linguistic weapon' bringing liberation in the Fanonian sense, as explored by Alamin Mazrui in his essay 'Language and the Quest for Liberation'.[105] Somewhat problematically, however, Peres claims that the French 'civilisation' is a bastion of diversity and humanity,[106] making no reference to colonial injustices or failing assimilationist policies. He does, however, speak of the importance of 'la Francophonie méditerranéenne, ce qui, dans notre conception, nous amène nécessairement à y inclure le Maghreb',[107] selected literature of which provides the primary corpus here.

During the course of this thesis, I shall use the term Mediterranean as opposed to

[103] Boualem Sansal, 'Où est passé ma frontière?', in *Pour une littérature-monde en français*, pp. 161-74 (p. 173).
[104] Memmi, 'Israël francophone', p. 25.
[105] Alamin Mazrui, 'Language and the Quest for Liberation in Africa: The Legacy of Frantz Fanon', *Third World Quarterly*, 14 (1993), 351-63 (p. 362).
[106] Peres, 'Israël, la France et la Francophonie', p. 14.
[107] *Ibid*., pp. 17-18.

Middle East, in line with Iain Chambers' conceptualisation of 'a contemporary Mediterranean where the Occident and the Orient, the North and the South, are evidently entangled in a cultural and historical net cast over centuries, even millennia'.[108] Similarly, Hélé Béji speaks of a 'union méditerranéenne', interpreted here as looking at the things that unite rather than presenting (or putting on) an homogenous, united 'front'. This union or 'réciprocité', as Béji puts it, consists of 'la cohabitation des différences culturelles'.[109] Béji identifies 'notre Antiquité commune' as a significant factor that unites 'les vieilles nations établies et consolidées depuis longtemps' (for example, France) and 'les jeunes nations encore frêles dans leurs fondements' (for example, Tunisia and Israel), Jews and Arabs across the Mediterranean, a common past which has been obfuscated by recent conflict notably over Palestine/Israel.[110] Katz concludes his book *The Burden of Brotherhood: Jews and Muslims from North Africa to France* (2015) with a section entitled "Mediterranean Mobilities, Constraints, and Fantasies".[111] Emphasising colonialism and

[108] Iain Chambers, *Mediterranean Crossings: The Politics of an Interrupted Modernity* (Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 2008), p. 3. For a brief history of the term 'Mediterranean', see pp. 12-15.
[109] Hélé Béji, 'Méditerranée: la demeure du temps', *Revue des deux mondes: Nous autres, méditerranéens*, 6 (2008), pp. 110-18 (p. 114).
[110] *Ibid*., pp. 110-11.
[111] Ethan B. Katz, *The Burdens of Brotherhood: Jews and Muslims from North Africa to France* (Cambridge, Massachusetts; London: Harvard University Press, 2015).

conflict, Katz nevertheless suggests that in spite of these, or perhaps even as a response to them, there has been a move 'to recover a Mediterranean of diverse peoples and encounters' and, in this way, the Mediterranean 'becomes once more the crucible not only of division and violence but [also] of possibility and coexistence'.[112] While 'Middle East' is arguably a colonial and orientalist term, externalising the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, the transcultural space of the Mediterranean encompasses France, North Africa, and Palestine/Israel, the three geographical areas on which I shall focus my attention and in which the conflict is internalised.

Peres distinguishes between the Middle East and the Mediterranean for different reasons, relating the former to Britain and the latter to France: 'la première a le plus souvent insisté sur ses « intêrets », alors que la seconde a préféré évoquer sa « présence »'.[113] It would appear that Peres' view of British colonial rule is deeply influenced by the way in which Israel and the Jews were treated by the British, particularly during the mandate period of 1920-1948, when Britain militarily occupied the land. Peres' criticism of the British from an Israeli point of view is likely based on: (1) a perceived duplicity in promising the Arabs and the Jews land; (2) the use of divide and rule as the occupying power

[112] *Ibid*., pp. 322-23.
[113] Peres, 'Israël, la France et la Francophonie', p. 17.

during the mandate period; (3) the limitation of Jewish immigration to mandate Palestine; (4) fighting against the Jews who sought independence, notably in supporting the Arab revolt; and (5) eventually siding with the Arabs apparently to serve their own interests, that is the economic gain the oil fields provided. Referring to Britain's divide-and-rule tactics in particular, Chouraqui writes in his *Lettre à un ami arabe* (prefaced by Peres):

> La guerre entre Juifs et Arabes en Palestine assurait à bon compte la suprématie britannique. Il était aisé de mettre en œuvre le trop fameux « Diviser pour Régner » et l'administration britannique ne sut pas toujours échapper à cette tentation.[114]

According to Avi Shlaim, the French, on the other hand, saw the British as 'perfidious', were 'not impressed' by their involvement in the Arab revolt (which they perceived as a British imperialistic move), and supplied weapons to the Stern Gang and Irgun.[115] Moreover, as Cairns notes in *Francophone Jewish Writers: Imagining Israel* (2015), before the establishment of the state of Israel, 'France had shown solidarity with Jewish

[114] Chouraqui, *Lettre à un ami arabe*, p. 121.

[115] Avi Shlaim, in answer to my question on the differences and similarities between Britain and France's approach to Palestine/Israel. Avi Shlaim, 'Britain and Palestine: From Balfour to Blair', The Middle East Centre – The Oxford Centre for Islamic Studies Friday Seminar Series, University of Oxford, 19 February 2016.

survivors of the Shoah desperate to emigrate to what was then Palestine' and had thus 'openly defied its Second World War ally Britain, which since 1923 had held a Mandate over the historically disputed territory'.[116]

It is of course problematic that no reference is made by Peres to France serving *its* own interests in imperialist exploitation and colonisation, particularly in the Maghreb, and also in its partnership with Britain in arbitrarily drawing up the land in the secret Sykes-Picot Agreement of April/May 1916.[117] In this agreement, the area which bordered Palestine was given to Great Britain, and Syria was given to France. Following Sykes-Picot, the League of Nations decreed that Britain set up a mandate for Palestine (including modern-day Jordan) and that France set up a mandate for Syria (including modern-day Lebanon). Under its mandate, France used its own tactics of divide and rule, discriminatory nationality codes, and 'demographic experiments' with devastating consequences for the region.[118] Moreover, as historian William I. Shorrock points out,

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[116] Lucille Cairns, *Francophone Jewish Writers: Imagining Israel* (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2015), p. 2.

[117] See James Barr, *A Line in the Sand: Britain, France and the Struggle for the Mastery of the Middle East* (London: Simon & Shuster, 2012).

[118] See Ayse Tekdal Fildis, 'The Troubles in Syria: Spawned by French Divide and Rule', *Middle East Policy Council*, 28 (2011), 129-39. For nationality codes and 'demographic experiments', see Philippe Bourmaud, 'Nationalité, internationalisme et visée coloniale dans les mandats français (1920-1946)', *Revue du Monde Musulman et de la Méditerranée*, 137 (2015), 75-94.

France had already penetrated the region pre-World War One on the three levels of religion, politics, and economics.[119] In other words, France may have only evoked its presence in Palestine, but it certainly made its presence known in Syria. In her article 'The Troubles in Syria', Ayse Tekdal Fildis argues that France intervened in Syria 'for her own strategic, economic and ideological purposes', in other words for its own interests, and then left the Syrians with no independence treaty when Britain forced the French to evacuate in 1946.[120] This evacuation was itself significant, as Debrauwere-Miller notes: 'The age-old Franco-British rivalry was exacerbated by the ousting of the French from Syria and Lebanon, which effectively pushed France into the arms of Zionism'.[121] This corresponds to what Cairns describes as France's 'cordial relationship' with Israel that emerged after the Second World War, which she puts down to 'guilt about France's complicity in the Shoah', 'Israel's socialist ideals and energy' which suited the Fourth Republic, and 'basic [...] economic interests'.[122] It was not until the Six-Day War of 1967 that France changed its tune, already having distanced itself from the region since 1956 though still retaining 'des

[119] William I. Shorrock, 'The French Presence in Syria and Lebanon Before the First World War, 1900-1914', *Historian*, 34 (1972), 293-303 (p. 293).
[120] See Fildis, 'The Troubles in Syria', p. 138.
[121] Debrauwere-Miller, 'Introduction: France and the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict', p. 2.
[122] Cairns, 'Righteous Realism Versus Postmodern Play', p. 73.

rapports cordiaux' according to de Gaulle, and providing Israel with weapons 'pour sa défense éventuelle' while advising 'modération'.[123] According to Cairns, 'from 1967, after the Six Day War in June and de Gaulle's notorious criticism in November of Jews [...], the friendship came to an abrupt end. From this point on, French foreign policy became progressively pro-Arab and progressively anti-Israeli', or at least was perceived as such by the Jewish state.[124]

Transnationalism and Transculturality

The primary texts studied here, in their dialogic nature, demonstrate what Rothberg terms 'multidirectional memory' where memory is 'subject to ongoing negotiation' rather than part of a '*competitive* [...] zero-sum struggle' by which, for example, the Shoah is pitted against the Nakba or vice

[123] In his speech following the Six Day War of 1967, de Gaulle states that '[à] la faveur de l'expédition franco-britannique de Suez, on avait vu apparaître en effet, un état d'Israël guerrier et résolu à s'agrandir, et ensuite l'action qu'il menait pour doubler sa population par l'immigration de nouveaux éléments donnait à penser que le territoire qu'il avait acquis ne lui suffirait pas longtemps et qu'il serait porté pour l'agrandir à utiliser toute occasion qui se présenterait. *C'est pourquoi d'ailleurs, la cinquième république s'était dégagée, vis-à-vis d'Israël, des liens spéciaux et très étroits que le régime précédent avait noué avec cet Etat* et la cinquième république s'était appliquée, au contraire, à favoriser la détente dans le Moyen-Orient'. De Gaulle, 'L'allocution radio-télévisée prononcée au Palais de l'Elysée le 16 septembre 1959', emphasis mine.

[124] Cairns, 'Righteous Realism Versus Postmodern Play', p. 73.

versa.[125] Forming part of the 'palimpsestic' nature of memory in the region, the traumatic legacies of both the Shoah and the Nakba (for example, the existential threat felt by Jewish Israelis, and the ongoing refugee crisis of Arab Palestinians) must be taken into account in any such negotiation. 'Palimpsestic memory' is a term coined by Silverman, which uses the concept of this metaphor of 'superimposition [...] of different temporal spaces to constitute a composite structure' to refer to 'a dynamic and open space composed of interconnecting traces of different voices, sites and times, [...] hold[ing] out the prospect of new solidarities across the lines of race and nation'.[126] These notions are useful when it comes to the polyvocal narratives studied here, which call for solidarity with and between Palestinians and Israelis, premised on mutual recognition of overlapping traumatic pasts, which unsettle fixating memories and fixed identity positions.

Rothberg distinguishes between the concepts of transcultural and transnational as follows: 'transcultural memory refers to the hybridization produced by the *layering* of historical legacies that occurs in the traversal of *cultural* borders, while transnational memory refers to the *scales* of remembrance that intersect in the crossing of *geo-political*

[125] Rothberg, *Multidirectional Memory*, p. 3, original emphasis.
[126] Silverman, *Palimpsestic Memory*, pp. 3, 8.

borders'.[127] In other words, transcultural memory is about crossing cultural boundaries through the palimpsestic layering of historical legacies, which leads to hybridisation, while transnational memory is about crossing geo-political boundaries with an emphasis on intersection. Rothberg argues that 'both transcultural and transnational lenses are needed to provide a new orientation that does not simply rewrite hegemonic forms of belonging for a globalized age'.[128] Cairns writes that the Israeli-Palestinian conflict 'is of crucial concern at a transnational level, not least for reasons of both domestic and global security'.[129] The notion of transnationality, itself a pliable one, is not to be confused with that of post-nationality. The concept of post-national identity and memory formation may be an attractive and seemingly liberating one, especially in postcolonial studies with its scepticism of the nation-state. However, as anthropologist Chiara De Cesari and literary critic Ann Rigney write in *Transnational Memory* (2014), 'even in a so-called post-national age, "the national" as a framework for identity and memory-making is still a powerful one', particularly in the context of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.[130]

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[127] Michael Rothberg, 'Multidirectional Memory in Migratory Settings: The Case of Post-Holocaust Germany', in *Transnational Memory*, pp. 123-45 (p. 130).
[128] *Ibid*.
[129] Cairns, 'Righteous Realism Versus Postmodern Play', p. 71.
[130] De Cesari and Rigney, 'Introduction', in *Transnational Memory*, pp. 1-25 (p. 6).

Rothberg writes in his contribution to De Cesari and Rigney's volume that

> the transnational turn cannot simply leave behind national memory if it is to offer a new approach, for such a move would only repeat modernity's logic of abstraction and supersession, essential components of national memory. Rather, the new transnational memory studies must think about how different layers and scales of memory coexist and interact in a non-teleological, non-progressive fashion.[131]

The Israeli-Palestinian conflict is so defined by and anchored in what Debrauwere-Miller terms 'the twin nationalist discourses of Arabism and Zionism'[132] that it is difficult to get away from ideas of 'particularisme' and national liberation.[133] Referring in particular to Palestinian and Israeli writing, Bernard claims that it 'gives us a way to challenge the anti-nationalist tendency in postcolonial studies by promoting an engagement with writers who are rather less sceptical about the

[131] Rothberg, 'Multidirectional Memory in Migratory Settings', pp. 126-27.
[132] Debrauwere-Miller, 'Introduction: France and the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict', p. 16.
[133] Memmi writes: 'Au lieu d'aller vers l'universalisme, vers l'interpénétration des civilisations, vers un Homme universel et fraternel, on retombe dans le particularisme, et même les perversions des jeunes nations' and 'la dimension nationale des peuples est une donnée de leur existence; les libérations nationales sont légitimes'. Albert Memmi, *La Terre intérieure* (Paris: Gallimard, 1976), p. 205.

idea of the nation'.[134] So it is with the Jewish and Arab writers who address the Israeli-Palestinian conflict in the texts studied here. They highlight the importance of self-determination and self-defence, in terms of nationhood for both Palestinians and Israelis. As Memmi writes of 'les luttes de libération des peuples dominés', including both Arabs (as formerly colonised) and Jews (as both partially colonised and victims of genocide), they often took on 'des formes nationales'.[135] Thus it was with the Algerian War of Independence of 1954-1962 (also known as the Algerian Revolution), and previously with the similarly named Israeli War of Independence of 1948 (also known as the Arab-Israel War), and so it continues to be with the Palestinian liberation movement which was formed partly in response to this very war. In a similar vein to Memmi, Chouraqui writes that '[l]a souffrance arabe et la souffrance judaïque […] allaient donner naissance à des mouvements intellectuels et politiques simultanés, parallèles, et même lorsqu'ils étaient dressés l'un contre l'autre'.[136] Memmi concludes: 'Je ne suis pas heureux que l'Histoire ait pris la livrée nationale, mais c'est un fait dont je dois tenir compte. Bref, c'est à regret, mais sans hésitation, que j'affirme qu'Israël est la

[134] Bernard, *Rhetorics of Belonging*, p. 22.
[135] Memmi, *La Terre intérieure*, p. 205.
[136] Chouraqui, *Lettre à un ami arabe*, p. 230.

solution nationale des Juifs'.[137] In the same way, it is argued (and has been for decades) that an independent state of Palestine is the national solution of the Palestinians.

Homi Bhabha's conceptualisation of hybridity is useful here to a point, in the sense that the authors studied in this thesis reject 'the binary representation of social antagonism' by which the Israel-Palestinian conflict is so often defined, instead providing 'a space of negotiation' in their writings.[138] However, while Bhabha seeks to 'decentralise the nation-state', the authors studied here recognise the distinctiveness and importance of this model as an expression of national liberation considering oppression and the right to self-determination. Bhabha's 'third space' could be translated in the context of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict into a one-state solution, based on Said's vision of 'a common humanity asserted in a binational state' as articulated in 'The Only Alternative' (2001).[139] In this article, Said takes the idea of a 'common humanity' from Nelson Mandela's anti-apartheid campaign, and makes a controversial parallel between modern-day Israel and apartheid South Africa.[140] The

[137] Memmi, *La Terre intérieure*, p. 206.
[138] Homi Bhabha, *The Location of Culture* (New York: Routledge, 1994), p. 58.
[139] Bhabha, *The Location of Culture*, pp. 37, 218. Edward Said, 'The Only Alternative', *Al-Ahram Weekly*, 1 March 2001, <http://weekly.ahram.org.eg/Archive/2001/523/op2.htm> [accessed 23 February 2016].
[140] For a critical reading of such parallels, see Benjamin Pogrund, *Drawing Fire: Investigating the Accusations*

reference to 'a common humanity' recalls Memmi's problematisation of the homogenisation of humanism in *La Terre intérieure* (1976): 'l'humaniste se trompe: les différences existent et elles font peur'.[141] Memmi argues that it is only in confronting this fear through education, in this case of Palestinians and Israelis from a young age and throughout their lives, that both parties can become familiar with the other's self and narrative: '[l]a seule solution pour avoir un monde plus humain n'est pas de nier les différences mais d'apprendre à les apprivoiser, en commençant dès l'école primaire, en continuant à tous les âges de la vie'.[142] Rather than advocating a one-state solution, the authors studied here seek to work towards a two-state solution in their writings, suggesting that negotiation between the two peoples can lead to liberation and living side by side in peace, security, and equality of status. The third space, then, is 'a space of negotiation'[143] between two peoples with their respective desires of self-determination and national liberation in two separate states – one fulfilled, the other awaiting fulfilment – rather than in one state for two peoples.

In an article entitled 'Identity, Memory and Cosmopolitanism: The Otherness of the Past and a Right to Memory' (2011), Anna

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of Apartheid in Israel (Lanham: Rowman & Littefield, 2014).

[141] Memmi, *La Terre intérieure*, p. 204.

[142] *Ibid*.

[143] Bhabha, *The Location of Culture*, p. 58.

Reading speaks of 'the human right to have the otherness of the past acknowledged through the creation of symbolic and cultural acts, utterances and expressions'.[144] The texts studied here, in their acknowledgement of the 'diverse pasts'[145] which underpin the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, attempt to fulfil both the Jewish and the Palestinian 'right to memory'.[146] Moreover, as 'projects that aim towards a dialogic understanding of the past' where 'memories exist in an essentially dialogic relation to each other', the texts can be seen as transcultural, imbued with 'ethical and political potential'.[147] These words are taken from Lucy Bond and Jessica Rapson's introduction to the volume *The Transcultural Turn* (2014), in which they argue that 'transcultural approaches to the theory and practice of memory demonstrate how shared co-ordinates (be they historical, cultural, political, or economic) may ease competitive

[144] Anna Reading, 'Identity, Memory and Cosmopolitanism: The Otherness of the Past and a Right to Memory', *European Journal of Cultural Studies*, 14 (2011), 379-94 (p. 379).

[145] According to Rothberg, 'memory emerges from unexpected, multidirectional encounters—encounters between diverse pasts and a conflictual present'. Michael Rothberg, 'Introduction: Between Memory and Memory: From Lieux de mémoire to Nœuds de mémoire', *Yale French Studies*, 118/119 (2010), 3-12 (p. 9). Similarly, Silverman writes that '[t]he relationship between present and past [...] takes the form of a superimposition and interaction of different temporal traces to constitute a sort of composite structure, like a palimpsest, so that one layer of traces can be seen through, and is transformed by, another'. Silverman, *Palimpsestic Memory*, p. 3.

[146] See Reading, 'Identity, Memory and Cosmopolitanism: The Otherness of the Past and a Right to Memory', pp. 379-394.

[147] Bond and Rapson, 'Introduction', pp. 18-19.

claims to history'.[148] Rothberg notes that 'memory is not the exclusive property of particular groups but rather emerges in a dynamic process of dialogue, contestation, and exchange that renders both memories and groups hybrid, open-ended, and subject to renegotiation'.[149] Similarly, Silverman writes that '[t]he notion of memory as palimpsest provides us with a politico-aesthetic model of cultural memory in that it gives us a way of perceiving history in a non-linear way and memory as a hybrid and dynamic process across individuals and communities'.[150] This theorisation of transcultural, multidirectional, and palimpsestic memory, with its emphasis on hybridity, cannot be carelessly applied to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, which is so caught up in disputes of physical and mnemonic property and exclusivity. Nevertheless, the texts studied here seek to create a space of literary (if not literal) dialogue and negotiation, through their characters' hybrid identities and interaction with the alleged 'other' (including the other's memories and narratives, as unsettling as these may be).

While aware of its 'contradictions' and 'constraints', as well as its 'possibilities', this thesis therefore situates itself within 'the

[148] *Ibid*., p. 19.
[149] Rothberg, 'Multidirectional Memory in Migratory Settings', p. 126.
[150] Silverman, *Palimpsestic Memory*, p. 6.

transcultural turn'.[151] Rothberg writes that 'a theory of transcultural memory has the greatest chance of developing when dialogue is established between methodological questions and case studies of cultural exchange and conflict'.[152] The methodological questions raised in my thesis revolve around issues of ethics, trauma, and the (geo)politics of memory. The 'case studies of cultural exchange and conflict' are texts written in French by authors who identify as either Arab/Berber or Jewish, or both. In line with the transcultural turn, the texts demonstrate 'how different layers and scales of memory coexist and interact in a non-teleological, non-progressive fashion'.[153] The chosen texts have all been published within the last twenty-five years, and can thus be situated within the post-1990 context of a developing 'so-called "French passion" for the Israel-Arab conflict', as Debrauwere-Miller puts it.[154] This period also includes both intifadas and a new phase of France-Palestine/Israel relations especially in the context of post-9/11 world politics.

[151] Dirk Moses and Michael Rothberg, 'A Dialogue on the Ethics and Politics of Transcultural Memory', in *The Transcultural Turn*, pp. 29-38 (p. 38).
[152] Moses and Rothberg, 'A Dialogue on the Ethics and Politics of Transcultural Memory', p. 35.
[153] Rothberg, 'Multidirectional Memory in Migratory Settings', pp. 126-27.
[154] Debrauwere-Miller, 'Introduction: France and the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict', p. 7.

The primary texts and their authors can be situated within this wider geopolitical context and ongoing heated debate. These texts challenge hierarchies as they are not cosmopolitan, elitist literature, but rather personal, relational, teachable (though multi-layered) works of fiction. They might be seen to fall under the category of popular literature. They are not only a way for the authors to personally come to terms with the conflict, *working through* their own conflicted identities, but also a way of *reaching out* as well as *working out*, engaging with history and memory in a dialogic fashion, so *working towards* peace and justice, what Derrida called 'la démocratie à venir'.[155] I have specifically chosen to include Arab/Berber and Jewish writers alongside one another, to bring their dialogic, often understudied fictional texts into dialogue with one another as they grapple with the contemporary on-the-ground reality and authentic experience of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

In the first chapter, entitled '*Récit d'affiliation*: The (European) Shoah and the (Arab) Jew in Israel', I examine to what extent Zenatti's novella *Mensonges* (2011) can be seen as a work of postmemory in terms of transgenerational transmission and (mis)appropriation of Shoah trauma in relation

[155] See Jacques Derrida, *Voyous: deux essais sur la raison* (Paris: Galilée, 2003), pp. 120, 132.

to Israeli identity and Arabic heritage. The novella explores the autobiographical narrator's relationship with Ukrainian-Israeli writer Aharon Appelfeld, who passed away in January 2018 and whose works Zenatti continues to translate from Hebrew into French.[156] *Mensonges* is what I term a *récit d'affiliation*, an extension of the *récit de filiation*, combining 'filial memory' and 'affiliative memory' as theorised by Hirsch, who herself draws from Said in his differentiation between filiation (vertical) and affiliation (horizontal).[157] The second chapter, entitled 'Contradiction in Terms? The *Pied-Noir* Jew and the Arab Israeli', looks at Benaïssa's play *L'Avenir oublié* (1999), written in co-operation with Chouraqui, a Jewish Israeli of (French) Algerian descent. In this chapter, I argue that the designation '*pied-noir* Jew' is in opposition to the 'Arab-Jew' claim. Through my analysis of the play, I go on to explore the potential of 'the Abrahamic' (drawing from Derrida) and 'the Semite' (drawing from Gil Anidjar and Joseph Massad) as possible alternatives to these polarised identity positions. The third chapter, entitled 'Paradoxical Identities? The Arab-Jew and the Jewish-Palestinian', examines

[156] See 'Aharon Appelfeld, histoire d'une vie', *La Grande table (1ère partie)*, France Culture, 8 January 2018, <https://www.franceculture.fr/emissions/la-grande-table-1ere-partie/aharon-appelfeld-histoire-dune-vie> [accessed 12 April 2018].

[157] Marianne Hirsch, 'The Generation of Postmemory', *Poetics Today*, 29 (2008), 103-28 (p. 114).

Haddad's concept of 'Palestinisraël'[158] through his novel *Palestine* (2007). Continuing with Abrahamic discourse, attention is paid to the author's self-definition as an Arabised Berber and a Berberised Jew, written into the protagonist, alongside Said's self-definition as a 'Jewish-Palestinian'.[159] The fourth chapter, entitled 'The Israeli-Palestinian and the Bedouin-Israeli', looks at Yasmina Khadra's novel *L'Attentat* (2005), with a particular focus on questions of identity, integration, implication, and radicalisation in relation to Arab Israelis, including (orientalised) Bedouins. These texts provide a space for dialogue within literature, as they stage encounters between Israelis and Palestinians, placing narratives of victimhood, anti-colonialism, and self-defence side by side. I argue that the reader becomes an 'implicated subject',[160] who is challenged by the texts to question his or her own assumptions about the conflict, broadening perspectives and putting events in historical and political context, raising awareness and

[158] See Valérie Marin La Meslée, 'Hubert Haddad: "Je ne suis pas un écrivain maudit"', *Le Point*, 28 April 2011, <http://www.lepoint.fr/grands-entretiens/hubert-haddad-je-ne-suis-pas-un-ecrivain-maudit-28-04-2011-1324933_326.php> [accessed 4 March 2016].

[159] See Edward Said, 'My Right of Return', in *Powers, Politics, and Culture: Interviews with Edward W. Said*, ed. by Gauri Viswanathan (New York: Vintage Books, 2001), pp. 443-58 (first publ. in Ari Shavit, 'Zekhut ha-shiva sheli', *Haaretz*, 18 August 2000).

[160] See Michael Rothberg, 'Trauma Theory, Implicated Subjects, and the Question of Israel/Palestine', *Profession*, 2 May 2014, <https://profession.mla.hcommons.org/2014/05/02/trauma-theory-implicated-subjects-and-the-question-of-israelpalestine/> [accessed 18 April 2018].

cultivating cross-cultural empathy and solidarity.

CHAPTER I

Récit d'affiliation: The (European) Shoah and the (Arab) Jew in Israel

In this chapter, I shall analyse Valérie Zenatti's *Mensonges* (2011), examining the applicability of the postmemory concept in terms of transgenerational transmission of and identification with (European) Shoah trauma as well as its relation to (Israeli) national identity and the lived experience of the Arab Jew.[161] This in turn raises questions as to the place of Sephardim/Mizrahim within the hegemonic framework of an arguably Eurocentric Israeli identity, of which the (post)memory of the Shoah forms an integral part, particularly following the Eichmann Trial. I shall thus explore the ambivalent position of the Arab Jew, specifically in relation to Israeli identity politics and Shoah memory as experienced by the unnamed autobiographical narrator of *Mensonges* whom I shall call Valérie, as differentiated from Zenatti the author.

Zenatti, perhaps best known for translating Appelfeld's work from Hebrew into French, has been establishing herself over the last couple of decades as a novelist in her own right. She is also known for her young adult fiction, notably for the autobiographical *Quand j'étais soldate* (2002) and the

[161] Valérie Zenatti, *Mensonges* (Paris: Olivier, 2011). All references to the primary text shall appear in brackets as follows: *M*, page number.

epistolary *Une bouteille dans la mer de Gaza*. The latter was selected by the Ministry of National Education, and adapted into the film *Une bouteille à la mer*. Zenatti's adult novels are published by the same publishing house as Appelfeld's translated work (Éditions de l'Olivier), under the category of 'Littérature française' as opposed to 'Littérature étrangère', as she writes in French and is a French national, having been born in France albeit to Algerian and Tunisian parents. I have chosen to include Zenatti among the authors explored in this thesis as she is understudied, writes from France about Israel, where she spent her teenage years, and is of North African Jewish heritage, which she explores in *Jacob, Jacob* (Prix du Livre Inter 2015).[162] This novel sheds light on the interrelatedness of colonial and Shoah memory in its depiction of two (French) Algerian Jews: one based on the author's great uncle Jacob, who is conscripted in World War Two to fight against the German army, thus liberating France; and the other based on Jacob's nephew Gabriel who joins the French army in its so-called 'pacification' of the Algerian resistance movement and fight for independence. Elsewhere, I argue that *Jacob, Jacob* forms the historical and heterogeneous infrastructure of Shoah trauma, colonial violence, and exilic displacement which underpins the Israeli-Palestinian conflict as

[162] Valérie Zenatti, *Jacob, Jacob* (Paris: Olivier, 2014).

explored in earlier texts written by Zenatti, including *Quand j'étais soldate*, *Une bouteille dans la mer de Gaza*, *En retard pour la guerre* (2006), and *Mensonges*.[163]

The most notable critical engagement with Valérie Zenatti's work can be found in Cairns' *Francophone Jewish Writers: Imagining Israel*, which includes analyses of Zenatti's *En retard pour la guerre*, *Quand j'étais soldate*, and *Une bouteille dans la mer de Gaza*.[164] Apart from this, there has been little critical engagement with Zenatti, and none as of yet with *Mensonges*, which will form the focus of this chapter. This novella was published by Éditions de l'Olivier, as part of the *Figure Libre* series (2008-2011). The idea behind the series was for selected authors, both well-known and less established, to write about the person who most inspires them, mixing (auto)biography with fiction.[165] In an interview, Zenatti states that *Mensonges*

[163] See Rebekah Vince, 'Pulled in All Directions: the Holocaust, Colonialism and Exile in Valérie Zenatti's *Jacob, Jacob*', in *Memory and Postcolonial Studies: Synergies and New Directions*, ed. by Dirk Göttsche (Oxford: Peter Lang, 2018), forthcoming.

[164] For analysis of *Quand j'étais soldate*, see Cairns, *Francophone Jewish Writers*, pp. 31-32, 81-82, 85, 91, 137, 160-161, 260, 277-78; for *En retard pour la guerre*, see pp. 52-55, 260-262. For *Une bouteille*, see Cairns, *Francophone Jewish Writers*, pp. 140, 169-71, 179-81, 183-84, 190-91, 269-70. See also *When I was a Soldier* (New York: Bloomsbury, 2005) and *A Bottle in the Gaza Sea* (New York: Bloomsbury, 2008), both translated by Adriana Hunter.

[165] Alongside Valérie Zenatti's *Mensonges* (Paris: Olivier, 2011), these include Agnès Desarthe's *Le Remplaçant* (Paris: Olivier 2009); Nathalie Kuperman's *Petit Déjeuner Avec Mick Jagger* (Paris: Olivier, 2008); and Maryline Desbiolles' *Une Femme Drôle* (Paris: Olivier, 2010), which explores the life and work of Isabelle von Allmen ("Zouc").

'est né de la collection *Figures libres* à Olivier où Olivier Cohen demande à des auteurs d'écrire sur leur héros et dévoiler un autoportrait'.[166] In the same interview, she confesses that 'Aharon Appelfeld est mon héros',[167] in line with the purpose of the series. Valérie's relationship with the Ukrainian-Israeli survivor of the Shoah is not limited to that of author-translator, but also takes on the form of grandfather-granddaughter and even brother-sister in her fabulation of their encounter.[168] This in turn raises questions as to the (mis)appropriation of Shoah (post)memory.

In *Mensonges*, the autobiographical narrator Valérie recounts how she absorbed the Shoah into her sense of self as a French (and eventually Israeli) Jew, by way of intimation and imitation, first through involuntary passive overhearing, and then through voluntary active engagement with visual and literary texts. This culminates in a literary, followed by a literal, encounter with Aharon Appelfeld. Even before this *rencontre*, however, Valérie invents Shoah-survivor

[166] Valérie Zenatti qtd. in Maryse Legrand, 'Carnet nomade avec Valérie Zenatti', *Fabrique de Sens*, 29 May 2011, <http://www.fabriquedesens.net/Carnet-nomade-avec-Valerie-Zenatti> [accessed 15 April 2016].
[167] *Ibid*.
[168] Desarthe has a similar relationship to Polish-born writer of Yiddish Isaac Bashevis Singer, whose works she translates and to whom she dedicated *Un secret sans importance* (Prix du Livre Inter 1996). Moreover, her hero in *Le Remplaçant* is also a surrogate grandfather (that is, her grandmother's second husband) who comes to replace her biological grandfather (who died in Auschwitz), and who merges with the pedagogue Janusz Korczak.

grandparents as a cover-up of her Algerian/Tunisian heritage upon immigrating to Israel. Valérie attempts to impress her Russian Jewish friends and to assimilate into Israeli society by concocting a familial connection to the Shoah, which she eventually finds in her adoptive grandfather, Aharon. In this chapter, I argue that what emerges in *Mensonges* is a *récit d'affiliation*, an extension of the *récit de filiation*, combining 'filial memory' and 'affiliative memory' to use Hirsch's theorisation of postmemory, which itself draws from Said's distinction between filiation (vertical) and affiliation (horizontal).[169]

Dominique Viart first coined the term *récit de filiation* to refer to a text which 'a pour originalité de substituer au récit plus ou moins chronologique de soi qu'autofiction et autobiographie ont en partage, une enquête sur *l'ascendance* du sujet'.[170] Viart writes that, in the *récit de filiation*, '[t]out se passe en effet comme si […] les écrivains remplaçaient l'investigation de leur *intériorité* par celle de leur *antériorité* familiale'.[171] Consequently, '[l]'un des enjeux ultimes est une meilleure

[169] Hirsch, 'The Generation of Postmemory', p. 114.
[170] Dominique Viart, 'Le silence des pères au principe du « récit de filiation »', *Études françaises*, 45 (2009), 95-112 (p. 96), original emphasis. See also Manet Van Montfrans, '*Des Hommes* de Laurent Mauvignier: Un roman de filiation?', *Relief*, 6 (2012), 15-27 (p. 17). For earlier work by Dominique Viart, see 'Filiations littéraires', in *Ecritures contemporaines 2 Etats du roman*, ed. by Jan Baetens and Dominique Viart (Paris-Caen: Lettres Modernes Minard, 1999), pp. 115-37.
[171] Viart, 'Le silence des pères au principe du « récit de filiation »', p. 96, original emphasis.

connaissance du narrateur de lui-même à travers ce(ux) dont il hérite'.[172] I contend that Zenatti's *Mensonges*, although ressembling a *récit de filiation*, would be better described as a *récit d'affiliation* in that the autobiographical narrator explores an affiliated family history and a heritage once removed from her own. According to Manet Van Montfrans, two interlinked characteristics of the *récit de filiation* are 'le défaut de transmission lié à une histoire collective, et l'enquête rétrospective comme moyen de réparer cette rupture'.[173] Zenatti's *Mensonges* contains both of these characteristics but troubles them further in that the autobiographical narrator is outside of the collective history (of European Jews) and therefore cannot heal the rupture without recourse to fabulation. Indeed, the last section of the novella combines real and imaginary events, fiction and (auto)biography, to stage a fairytale-like encounter between Aharon and Valérie as children hiding in a forest together. This fable or *conte* is portrayed as (closest to) 'la vérité' in a novella about so-called 'mensonges'.

As well as their mutual connection to the Shoah, albeit once removed for Valérie, there is a clear link between Aharon's experience upon arrival in British Mandate Palestine in the 1940s as a young Shoah

[172] *Ibid*.
[173] Montfrans, '*Des Hommes* de Laurent Mauvignier: Un roman de filiation?', p. 17.

survivor and Valérie's experience upon arrival to Israel in the 1980s as a French Jew of North African descent. Both had to denounce their diasporic identity and assume the Zionist ideology of the 'New Jew' with its mandate to forget the past. Paradoxically, it is Valérie's lack of connection to the catastrophic past of European Jews that excludes her from the Israeli collective which has absorbed Shoah memory into its national identity, whereas Aharon was marginalised for having such a connection.

Postmemory of the Unfamiliar in France

Hirsch first developed the term 'postmemory' to refer to the specific 'familial inheritance and transmission of cultural trauma', particularly in relation to 'children of victims, survivors, witnesses, or perpetrators' of the Shoah.[174] She does, however, acknowledge the malleability of the term, arguing for inclusivity over specificity: 'although familial inheritance offers the clearest model for it, postmemory need not be *strictly* an identity position. Instead, I prefer to see it as an intersubjective transgenerational space of remembrance, linked specifically to cultural or collective trauma'.[175] Here I shall analyse to what extent the autobiographical narrator of

[174] Marianne Hirsch, 'Surviving Images: Holocaust Photographs and the Work of Postmemory', *The Yale Journal of Criticism*, 14 (2001): 5-37 (p. 9).
[175] *Ibid*., p. 10.

Mensonges can be seen as an 'agent of postmemory',[176] in her postwar encounter with the historical reality of the Shoah, which her parents and grandparents, who had been born in colonial Algeria and Tunisia, had managed to escape, before emigrating to France where Valérie herself was born. In this way, she can be seen as an illegitimate member of the third generation, dislocated, in both temporal and familial terms, from the European catastrophe.

Valérie's first encounter with the Shoah is in a French playground at a primary school in Nice, 1979:

> Dehors, une rumeur enfle, tourbillonne, s'engouffre dans l'école par la voix d'un camarade, Cédric ou Patrick, et dit, « Vous avez vu? À la télé, ils passent un film sur la guerre. Ah! ouais, c'est quelque chose, ça s'appelle *Holocauste*. Qu'est-ce qu'ils leur ont mis aux Juifs! » Mon cœur marque un arrêt, je réprime un tremblement, regarde derrière moi comme si j'étais suivie, serre mes mains moites sous mon bureau, baisse la tête. Je pense à ce que je suis, ce que je fais, et mes camarades de classe ignorent (*M*, pp. 17-18).

What is other to her classmates – 'le Juif' – constitutes a hidden aspect of Valérie's self, and her reaction upon hearing this word is shame, and fear of being found out. Her

[176] Hirsch, 'Postmemories in Exile', p. 666.

Jewishness manifests itself discretely through the morning prayer, the Shabbat meal, and the weekly service at the synagogue, which exempts her from school on Saturdays, creating a rift between the secular week and the religious weekend: 'le samedi, j'existe loin de mes camarades et ils existent loin de moi' (*M*, pp. 18-19). As such, Valérie is decidedly French and assimilated during the week – 'comme les autres, banale' – which she separates from the weekend. On Shabbat she embraces her 'Jewish side', which is 'other' to her classmates who simultaneously become 'other' from her; they are unable to identify with her Jewishness, even ignorant of it. And yet even the French language is such that to dress well is associated with going to church, thus she goes to the synagogue on a Saturday 'endimanchée', wearing her 'Sunday best' (*M*, p. 19). As Memmi notes, 'nous vivons toujours, même en Occident, dans des sociétés fondamentalement religieuses, même si elles se sont laïcisées en surface', the result of which is 'une espèce de hiatus constant entre la vie publique du citoyen juif et sa vie privée'.[177]

At first glance, Zenatti's reference to the underground ('la vie souterraine') suggests a secret resistance to French assimilation, yet it appears more to be associated with shame and denunciation than with defiance. What resistance there is fits safely within the

[177] Albert Memmi, *Juifs et Arabes* (Paris: Gallimard, 1974), pp. 33-34.

framework of *laïcité*. Valérie has permission to be taken out of class on Saturdays in order to attend the synagogue, so long as her religion remains private, practised 'invisibly', outside of school hours and grounds. However, she risks giving her game away in CE1, when asked to write a piece on 'votre plus beau Noël':

> J'ai pris mon courage à deux mains, ou bien étais-je en confiance, ou bien n'aimais-je pas tricher, alors j'ai rendu ce devoir:
>
> *Nous ne faisons pas Noël car nous sommes Juifs mais chaque année, à la même époque que Noël, nous fêtons Hanoukka, qui est la fête des lumières. Nous décorons la maison, allumons des bougies sur un chandelier, et nous recevons des cadeaux* (*M*, pp. 19-20).

The narrator does not include the teacher's reaction, but the preamble suggests the piece of writing could be read either as an act of defiance (crossing the line) or one of compliance (staying in line). The latter is more likely, as it is in keeping with her identity as model pupil, assimilated into the French classroom: 'Serieuse, appliquée, je lis *Petites Filles modèles*, j'en suis une, [...] j'aime être assise au premier rang, lever le doigt, donner la bonne réponse' (*M*, p. 17). In her contribution to *Je est un autre: Pour une identité-monde*, entitled 'Entre-deux', Zenatti

writes (in the third person): 'pour mettre de l'ordre dans les origines décidément complexes et insaisissables, la petite fille juive, française, née de parents rapatriés d'Algérie, décide qu'elle n'aura qu'une identité: première de la classe'.[178] The use of the term 'rapatriés' is interesting here, as it suggests a return to France as the 'mère-patrie' not just of *pied-noirs* (European settlers) but also of assimilated (French) Algerian Jews.[179]

Valérie further reflects upon her ambivalent relationship with Jewishness, in relation to her first encounter with the history of European Jews under Nazi rule, as the chapter continues:

> J'aime les chants en hébreu que nous chantons le samedi après le repas, en famille, et j'aime plus que tout les plats que ma grand-mère cuisine pour le shabbat et les fêtes, mais, à l'école, je n'aime pas être juive. Je ne sais pas pourquoi. J'ai l'impression qu'il y a un problème, une honte, une gêne. Quand j'entends la phrase prononcée par Patrick, ou Cédric, je devine que la clé du mystère est peut-être dans ce que les nazis [...] ont « mis aux Juifs » (*M*, p. 20).

The negative shift from 'en famille' to 'à l'école' and from '[j]'aime les chants en

[178] Zenatti, 'Entre-deux', p. 113.
[179] This is something to which we shall return in the next chapter, specifically in relation to Chouraqui.

hébreu' to 'je n'aime pas être juive', preceded by the 'mais', reveals an internal conflict and contradiction: Valérie's Jewishness, happily expressed in the private family sphere, is renounced (if not denounced) in the public school sphere. The narrator feels a sense of shame at being Jewish when at school which leads her to hide behind the veneer of a French model pupil, yet it is a shame which is inexplicable, if not unfounded. It is only upon hearing of 'ce que les nazis [...] ont « mis aux Juifs »' that Valérie begins to understand why she felt the need to keep her Jewish identity a secret, even before she was consciously aware of any past or future threat.

Valérie's second encounter with the Shoah is within the Jewish community and recalls the first encounter in the French playground:

> un samedi, un mot siffle au dessus de ma tête comme un serpent, « nazi », ou « les nazis », et soudain je crois me souvenir que la phrase exacte entendue à l'école et prononcée par Patrick, ou Cédric, était: « Qu'est ce qu'ils leur ont mis, aux Juifs, les nazis » (*M*, p. 19).

The reference to the serpent recalls the temptation and transgression in the Garden of Eden, and the loss of childlike innocence through the knowledge of good and evil, followed by death entering the world. It is this second encounter that provokes Valérie to

explore further, starting with the American television series *Holocaust* (1978), as this is her only reference point at the time. Although the series is 'déconseillée aux enfants et aux âmes trop sensibles', Valérie manages to convince her mother that her primary school teacher insisted she watch it, 'que c'était aussi important qu'un cours d'histoire' (*M*, p. 20). Her mother agrees on the condition that she watches it with her, thus creating a transgenerational space of secondary witnessing, albeit without a direct familial connection to the catastrophe, as her mother, who was born in colonial Algeria, managed to escape the Shoah. According to Hirsch, postmemory is 'a historical and generational moment that is fully cognizant of the mediated and media-driven scene of representation that shapes both knowledge and memory of the Holocaust'.[180] The American television series forms part of this scenic staging. For Valérie, however, there is no 'familial inheritance' of trauma;[181] she is neither a second-generation nor a third-generation survivor of the Shoah, as her parents and grandparents, born in North Africa, were not directly affected by the catastrophe. Nevertheless, she and her mother can be seen to engage in what Elke Heckner terms 'secondary – [...] [if] not second-generation – witnessing'.[182] It is 'through

[180] Hirsch, 'Surviving Images', p. 8.
[181] *Ibid*., p. 9.
[182] Elke Heckner, 'Whose Trauma Is It? Identification and Secondary Witnessing in the Age of Postmemory', in *Visualizing the Holocaust*, ed. by David Bathrick,

particular forms of identification, adoption, and projection', Hirsch argues, that postmemory 'can be more broadly available'.[183] In this way, the American television series *Holocaust* can be seen as a form of projection through which Valérie identifies with the victims, simultaneously adopting and being adopted by them, one of them without being one with them.

Although the television series is an American one, the narrator describes its airing on France 2 as 'un événement national' (*M*, p. 21). As such, it can be seen as an example of what Assmann terms 'transnational memory'[184] because, to use her quoting of Micol Siegel's terminology, it acts as a unit 'that spill[s] over and seep[s] through national borders',[185] from the United States to France, among other European countries. The American television series is a national event in France in the sense that it provides an opportunity for French people to break the silence and to talk about their experiences: '[d]urant les mois qui suivent, je glane des bribes d'informations sur cet « holocauste », ce mot que je ne comprends toujours pas. *Les Dossiers de l'écran* ont délié les langues' (*M*, p. 24). The series can thus be seen as a

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Brad Prager, and Michael D. Richardson (Rochester, New York: Camden House, 2008), pp. 62-85 (p. 70).

[183] Hirsch, 'Surviving Images', p. 9.

[184] Aleida Assmann, 'Transnational Memories', *European Review*, 22 (2014), 546-56.

[185] Micol Siegel qtd. in Assmann, 'Transnational Memories', p. 546. See Micol Siegel, 'Beyond Compare: Comparative Method after the Transnational Turn', *Radical History Review*, 91 (2005), 62-90.

catalyst for national anamnesia which is understood, by Amaleena Damlé's definition, as a refusal of an amnesic 'absence of memory [...] in an act of double negativity that recollects something that has always already been lost'.[186] An example of this is found in Valérie's neighbour's confession that a Jew once worked at her bakery as an apprentice:

> La boulangère au pied de notre immeuble raconte: « Vous savez, il y en avait un, de Juif, qui travaillait chez nous. Un apprenti. Je crois qu'on avait à peu près le même âge, seize ou dix-sept ans. Il travaillait là, en bas. (Elle désigne une trappe derrière la caisse.) Un jour, ils sont venus le chercher. On l'a plus jamais revu. » (*M*, p. 24).

Valérie's reaction is one of dumbfoundedness at her first encounter with the tangibility of absence and eye-witness testimony (as opposed to postmemory or representation), in the form of her neighbour's confession: 'Elle a été témoin de « ça ». Elle a vu de ses yeux le cauchemar que je fais chaque soir' (*M*, p. 24). What is experienced postmemorially in nightmare form is juxtaposed with what was witnessed in concrete time and place.

Thus, at least at first, Valérie's encounter with the Shoah is not through what

[186] Amaleena Damlé qtd. in Debra Kelly, 'From Cultural Amnesia to Anamnesia in Reading Life-Writing Narratives of the French Occupation: The Lost Manuscript, the Handwritingness of History and the Broken Narrative', *Synthesis*, 2 (2010), 48-61 (p. 48).

Hirsch terms 'surviving images', that is 'images of perpetrators, resisters, and victims [which] together yield an enormous archive of diverse representations'.[187] Rather she encounters the Shoah through an American re-representation, a staged re-enactment on film. Nevertheless, it is portrayed as a traumatic encounter. After relaying some of the scenes from the series, Valérie describes her mixed feelings of despair and disbelief, heightened self-consciousness of her position as a Jew in Europe, fear which manifests itself as paranoia, and desire to know more about what happened. The emotions of despair and fear are felt viscerally (*M*, p. 22) and her bodily or out-of-body response – crying, pain in the chest, trembling – is suggestive of a kind of postmemorial post-trauma. Moreover, a renewed awareness of her Jewishness leads to identification with the fate of the children who died in the death camps: 'je ne peux pas ne pas penser que je suis Juive moi aussi, comme ces enfants qu'on vient d'envoyer à la mort' (*M*, pp. 22-23). The 'moi aussi' creates a link between herself and the children, while the 'comme' (like but not the same as) prevents her from fully appropriating their identity, just as their death separates them from her life. The incredulity is linked to a realisation that the unimaginable and seemingly impossible actually happened:

[187] Hirsch, 'Surviving Images', pp. 7-8.

> à cet instant la fiction n'a pas de sens car je sais que cela s'est passé, je sais que cela a eu lieu, que cela a été possible, des millions de fois possible, qu'on traque qu'on déporte qu'on affame qu'on torture qu'on humilie et qu'on tue des gens simplement parce qu'ils étaient Juifs (*M*, p. 23).

Alongside this sense of incredulity, portrayed in the lack of punctuation and numerous successive verbs, Valérie's recognition of and revulsion at what occurred in the past translates into a sense of apprehension and foreboding in the present. Indeed, Valérie fears that it ('ça') might reoccur:

> Cela s'est passé en Europe, sur le sol où je suis née, vingt-cinq ans à peine avant ma naissance, et, malgré mon jeune âge, je sens que ces vingt-cinq ans ne sont pas grand-chose, je sais que les criminels sont encore en vie, leur soif de tuer et leur cruauté me semble palpables, toutes proches, comme l'étoffe de leurs uniformes noirs, alors j'ai peur, je pleure, je ne veux pas aller dormir ce soir-là, rue de France, à Nice, je suis persuadée qu'un S.S. est caché sous mon lit, je ne saurais dire comment il est arrivé là, [...] pendant plusieurs mois, plusieurs années, je le sentirai tapi sous mon lit, guettant le moment où il me tuera. Voilà, la plupart des enfants ont peur du noir, peur du loup, et moi, j'ai peur des S.S. (*M*, pp. 23-24).

The unsettling paranoia and nightmares can be seen as a post-traumatic response to the Shoah, as first encountered through the mediated form of film. This sense of paranoia, illustrated in the fear that an SS guard is hiding under her bed, was already hinted at on first hearing her classmates speak of 'ce qu'ils leur ont mis aux Juifs', when Valérie looks behind her to check she is not being followed (*M*, p. 18). Even before that, at the beginning of the chapter, Valérie describes how she felt protected in the classroom, without understanding why this was necessary: 'L'école est un lieu dans lequel je me sens protégée. Protégée de quoi? de qui? Protégée. Point' (*M*, p. 17). The desire to be protected from an unidentifiable threat combines with the wish to be accepted as an assimilated French pupil, which compels her to keep her Jewishness a secret at school. The nightmares, meanwhile, are an acting out of this fear of being unprotected, as they depict '[d]es hommes qui arrivent, me prennent, m'arrachent à ma mère' (*M*, p. 24). They are the oneirological representation of her imaginary reconstruction of Nazis on first hearing the word in the school playground, 'les nazis – qui, à la façon dont le mot est prononcé, ont l'air de créatures étranges, voire terrifiantes' (*M*, p. 20).

This understandable though seemingly irrational fear is not limited to the subjective experience of a postwar Jewish child with an apparently overactive imagination who is

virtually traumatised by a television series depicting the Shoah. The narrator describes how when she goes with her parents to light a Hanukkah candle 'en soutien aux refuzniks juifs empêchés de quitter l'Union soviétique', her mother is warned by a fellow Jew not to sign the petition with her real name and address: 'Un homme que l'on croise chaque samedi à la synagogue se glisse près d'elle et murmure: « [...] S'il arrive quelque chose un jour, ils n'auront plus qu'à prendre ces listes pour savoir où nous trouver »' (*M*, pp. 25-26). Valérie concludes from this precaution that 'même les adultes ont encore peur que « ça » revienne. Ainsi, être Juif est encore terriblement dangereux, voire mortel' (*M*, p. 26). The apparently irrational fear of history repeating itself in something as catastrophic as a 'second holocaust' is shown to be one which is shared by adult members of the Jewish community in France, who believe they must always be on their guard, *au cas où*. The difference is that there is a psychotic element to Valérie's fear, in that she is convinced ('persuadée') that there is *in reality* an S. S. guard under her bed *in the present*, and 'aucun raisonnement ne pourra m'ôter l'idée de la tête' (*M*, p. 23). The Jewish man's fear, on the other hand, is of what *might happen in the future*, because of what *did happen* in the past, and thus necessitates precautionary measures in the present.

The autobiographical narrator's desire to know more about the Shoah is not abated

by watching the American television series. Indeed, this is just the beginning for Valérie, who subsequently turns to autobiographical children's fiction in her quest for knowledge, notably *Un sac de billes* (1973) and *Le Journal d'Anne Frank* (1950). Through these books 'et d'autres livres dont j'ai oublié le titre', Valérie 'reconstitue la suspicion, les interdits, les lois raciales dont les Juifs furent peu à peu victimes, leur mise à l'écart de la population et de la vie normale' (*M*, pp. 24-25). The reconstitution of what happened through autobiographical accounts shapes Valérie's postmemory which, according to Hirsch, is 'a powerful form of memory precisely because its connection to its object or source is mediated not through recollection but through representation, projection, and creation'.[188] It is through these books that Valérie learns 'qu'avant de les obliger à porter l'étoile jaune, la police fichait les Juifs, dressait des listes', prompting her to consider (or reflect upon) her subjectivity and positionality as a Jew in France:

> Dans la glace plaquée sur la porte de mon armoire, je scrute mes yeux noirs, mes cheveux noirs et bouclé, je me répète: « C'est comme ça qu'ils repéraient les Juifs, à la couleur de leurs yeux et de leurs cheveux. Alors ils m'auraient repérée, moi. Ils m'auraient raflée. Je n'aurais pas pu fuir. Mon apparence physique

[188] *Ibid*., p. 9.

> m'aurait trahie et condamnée » (*M*, p. 25).

Here, the use of the verb in the past conditional simultaneously connects and disconnects Valérie from the historical reality and the hypothetical reality. There is a shift from the objective (what happened to the Jews then) to the subjective (what would have happened to her as a Jew under the Vichy regime). In other words, she recognises in her reflection that she is simultaneously one of them, a Jew in France, and not one of them, a Jew in France *at that time*. There is a temporal distance of twenty-five years between herself and the victims of the Shoah. As Hirsch writes, postmemory has 'its basis in displacement, [...] vicariousness and belatedness',[189] all of which are characterised in this encounter with the other through Valérie's reflection of (and upon) herself.

Valérie continues her investigative research of the Shoah through literary works when a teenager in Israel, having immigrated with her parents there at thirteen years old, the age of bar mitzvah, the Jewish rite of passage. After quenching her initial thirst for Francophone literature (ranging from Zola to Camus) at 'la bibliothèque du centre culturel français', she turns her attention exclusively to literature on the Shoah, including fictional and non-fictional works: 'pendant des mois entiers, je ne lis plus que des livres qui

[189] *Ibid*., p. 9.

racontent la Catastrophe et c'est ainsi que j'attise mes cauchemars entre les pages de [ces livres]' (*M*, p. 34). The list includes autobiographical works, notably *Au nom de tous les miens* (1971), written by Martin Gray and adapted into a film by the same name in 1983, and *La Nuit* (1956) by Elie Wiesel, alongside *Trois ans dans une chambre à gaz d'Auschwitz* (1997), written by Filip Müller, a member of the Sonderkommando who also features in Claude Lanzmann's *Shoah* (1985). The journalistic *Sans oublier les enfants* (1991) by Éric Conan, and the historical *Destruction des Juifs d'Europe* (1961) by American political scientist Raul Hilberg, join these autobiographies 'et tant d'autres [ouvrages]' (*M*, p. 34), to form part of Valérie's process of investigation into the Shoah which preceded her birth, but which took place in the country of her birth.

The (In)Appropriateness of (Mis)Appropriation

Valérie is eight years old when she encounters the Shoah for the first time, albeit in mediated form, the same age as Aharon when he experienced it – 'ça', the unnameable – 'for real'. There are other similarities between the two (auto)biographical protagonists in Zenatti's *Mensonges*. The narrator, under the guise of Aharon, writes:

> Mes parents étaient des humanistes européens qui souhaitaient considérer l'homme tel qu'en lui-même, détaché de ses origines et de son appartenance religieuse. Je me souviens encore du calme qui régnait à la maison, et de la voix de ma mère me lisant le soir des histoires de Jules Verne ou Karl May (*M*, p. 9).

Both the protagonists are assimilated, humanist, European, *laïque*, and lovers of (notably Eurocentric) literature.[190] Aharon's experience is summarised under the guise of autobiography in the first section of *Mensonges*, entitled 'Apparence', in which the first-person narrator appears to introduce 'himself':

> J'ai vu le jour à Czernowitz, en 1932, dans une famille de la bourgeoisie juive assimilée. [...] J'avais huit ans quand la guerre a éclaté. Nous nous sommes retrouvés entassés dans un ghetto. Je n'ai pas vu ma mère mourir mais j'entends encore son dernier cri (*M*, p. 9).

The chapter ends with a negation of this opening passage: 'Je ne m'appelle pas Aharon Appelfeld. Je n'ai pas vu le jour à Czernowitz

[190] Jules Verne is best known for his novel *Le Tour du monde en quatre-vingt jours* (1872), depicting the so-called 'Golden Age' of British and French imperialism. He also wrote *Le Château des Carpathes* (1892), set in the historically Austro-Hungarian Carpathian region where Appelfeld spent his childhood before the Shoah. Karl May wrote of German colonialism and the Old American West.

et je n'ai pas été l'enfant unique d'une famille juive assimilée. Ma mère n'a pas été assassinée par les nazis' (*M*, pp. 13-14). And yet Valérie's assertion that '[j]'avais huit ans quand la guerre a éclaté' (*M*, p. 10) is not wholly untrue, as this was the moment she encountered the Shoah, albeit in mediated form, which turned her child's world upside down. As Zenatti states in an interview, 'Aharon avait 8 ans quand la guerre a éclaté, je découvre la Shoah au même âge. A 13 ans, nous arrivons en Israël et apprenons l'hébreu. Je superpose nos deux voix, afin de parler de moi en transparence'.[191] The opening section of *Mensonges*, 'Apparence', in which she assumes Aharon's voice to tell of his experience of the Shoah and immigration to Israel, is a necessary step for her to reach the second section, 'Transparence'. Here she finds her own voice as she tells of her encounter with the Shoah (*M*, pp. 17-25), her move to Israel (*M*, pp. 27-35), her visit to Auschwitz (*M*, pp. 37-44), and finally her meeting with Appelfeld – first in France through his books (*M*, pp. 45-49), and then in Jerusalem through face-to-face dialogue (*M*, pp. 51-56).

In her adoption of the Ukranian-Israeli author's voice in the first section, the translator shows how much his words permeate her being and influence her writing.

[191] Valérie Zenatti qtd. in Hannah E., 'Valérie Zenatti: "Mensonges"', *Centre communautaire laïc juif*, 5 May 2011, <http://www.cclj.be/actu/judaisme-culture/valerie-zenatti-mensonges> [accessed 7 April 2016] (para 2 of 5).

As Zenatti states in an interview on *Mensonges*, in which she blurs the boundaries between truth and lies, 'les mensonges peuvent aussi accéder à une certaine vérité. Le livre s'ouvre sur *« Je suis Aharon Appelfeld »*, ou comment la traductrice est imprégnée par la voix de l'écrivain'.[192] As Derrida writes, 'la traduction est toujours une tentative d'appropriation qui vise à transporter chez soi, dans sa langue, le plus proprement possible, de la façon la plus relevante possible le sens le plus propre de l'original, même si c'est le sens propre d'une figure'.[193] In a sense, when Valérie Zenatti translates Aharon Appelfeld's novels written in the first-person, she too assumes the 'je' of the protagonist in autobiographical imitation, as the 'je' of the narrator often conceals that of the author in autobiographical intimation. Zenatti elucidates in an interview: 'En traduisant son œuvre, j'écris les livres que je ne peux pas écrire seule. Je n'en ai ni la capacité, ni l'autorisation, alors j'ai besoin qu'Appelfeld me prenne par la main'.[194] As one not only 'born after' but also with (grand)parents born elsewhere, Valérie is not qualified or authorised to write of the Shoah as personal experience, but can access this memory through translating the works of someone who

[192] *Ibid*.
[193] Jacques Derrida, 'Qu'est-ce qu'une traduction « relevante »', in *Quinzièmes assises de la traduction littéraire* (Arles: Actes sud, 1999), pp. 21-47 (pp. 25-26).
[194] Zenatti qtd. in E., 'Valérie Zenatti: "Mensonges"' (para 4 of 5).

has endured and testifies to the Catastrophe. It is in the last section that the young Aharon Appelfeld (whose original name was Erwin) takes her by the hand as they negotiate the forest together, escaping from the Nazis who for Aharon/Erwin were an actual threat, and for Valérie an imagined one. As Zenatti states in an interview,

> [c]'est le lieu de rencontre, la forêt, c'est-à-dire qu'Aharon Appelfeld lui, a bel et bien été un enfant perdu dans la forêt lorsqu'il s'est échappé du camp où il avait été déporté avec son père. Il se trouve que moi, petite fille juive, née en France en 1970, ayant découvert à l'âge de huit ans la réalité de l'extermination des juifs, j'ai traversé des peurs absolument effroyables à la simple idée qu'on pouvait tuer des gens parce qu'ils étaient juifs, des enfants comme moi.[195]

Here Zenatti creates a link between Aharon and herself as vulnerable children fearing for their safety. Although her fears were far less grounded in reality than his, she suggests they were nevertheless real to her childhood self.

According to Hirsch, 'identification can resist appropriation and incorporation, resist annihilating the distance between self and other'.[196] Similarly, LaCapra speaks of the 'difficulty [which] arises when the virtual

[195] Zenatti qtd. in Legrand, 'Carnet nomade avec Valérie Zenatti'.
[196] Hirsch, 'Surviving Images', p. 11.

experience involved in empathy gives way to vicarious victimhood, and empathy with the victim seems to be-come an identity'.[197] He argues that 'the secondary witness' should 'resist [...] full identification and the dubious appropriation of the status of victim through vicarious or surrogate victimage'.[198] In literally (or at least literarily) embodying the young Aharon in the first section of *Mensonges*, Valérie might be accused of crossing the line of identification and transgressing into the dangerous territory of appropriation, incorporation, and vicarious victimhood. As Heckner writes: '[a]t stake is the appropriation, that is, the substitution of the self for the other'.[199] In the opening chapter of *Mensonges* in particular, Valérie risks 'substitution through identification' in adopting Aharon's first-person voice, but in the closing chapter she favours 'intersubjectivity and intercorporeality' over appropriation, thus maintaining the distance between her (fictionalised) self and (the fictionalised) Aharon/Erwin.[200] Moreover, the chapters in which she recounts her real-life encounter with Aharon, first through his books and then in person, puts the opening section into perspective. Here again, the

[197] LaCapra, 'Trauma, Absence, Loss', p. 717.
[198] *Ibid*.
[199] Heckner, 'Whose Trauma Is It?', p. 77.
[200] Carol A. Kidron, 'Breaching the Wall of Traumatic Silence: Holocaust Survivor and Descendant Person-Object Relations and the Material Transmission of the Genocidal Past', *Journal of Material Culture*, 17 (2012), 3-21 (p. 17). Hirsch, 'Surviving Images' , p. 11.

novella resembles a *récit de filiation*, defined as '[un] espace d'écriture où l'autre et soi ne peuvent être dissociés', yet there is a dissociation in that Valérie does not have a direct connection to the Shoah either through first-hand experience or filial memory.[201] The novella can thus be more precisely described as a *récit d'affiliation*.

Before her real-life encounter with Aharon Appelfeld and in order to make it possible, Valérie immigrates to Israel as a young teenager and has to learn Hebrew, much as Aharon had done decades earlier. On first arriving in Israel as a pre-adolescent, Valérie's relationship to Hebrew, as a language which is at once culturally foreign and religiously familiar, is an ambivalent one:

> Pendant plusieurs mois j'ai été sourde, muette, je n'ai pas compris ce qui se disait autour de moi, je n'ai pas pu exprimer ce que je ressentais, pensais, je n'ai pas pu dire qui j'étais ou pensais être. Et lorsque j'ai commencé à acquérir la langue, ma situation a empiré. De sourde et muette, je suis devenue bête. [...] Bête comme quelqu'un qui comprend les arguments de son interlocuteur mais ne trouve pas les mots pour lui opposer les siens. Bête comme la dernière de la classe, statut qui

[201] Béatrice Vernier-Larochette, 'Photographie et récit de filiation: *L'Africain* de J. M. G. Le Clézio', *University of Toronto Quarterly*, 81 (2012), 265-278 (p. 269).

> incarne alors pour moi la pire des conditions (*M*, p. 28).

There is a shift here from receptive aphasia to expressive aphasia, as Valérie attempts to grasp a language which appears to fall through her fingers rather than run off her tongue. Moreover, the failure to comprehend what is going on around her, coupled with an inability to express herself which persists even after she begins to understand the language, further establishes Valérie's position as an outsider, a position already determined by her Arab heritage. Having strived to be a model pupil in France, the idea of being the last in the class is a humiliating one for Valérie. She describes feeling like a infant – 'c'est-à-dire, étymologiquement, « celle qui ne parle pas »' (*M*, p. 28) – in an adolescent's body, further accentuated by the patronising way in which 'more established' Israelis, who are presumably fluent in Hebrew, speak to her:

> À l'âge où j'ai eu mes règles et où mes seins ont commencé à pousser, [...] il a fallu apprendre le langage des signes auquel se raccrochent tous les exilés, [...] et cet air de commisération avec lequel on regarde celui qui ne parle pas la langue du pays, la tête penche vers lui en articulant outre mesure « tu comprends? » (*M*, pp. 28-29).

Thus Valérie feels like an exile in her supposed mother country, where as a Jew she

should apparently feel 'at home'. Appelfeld describes a similar experience in his autobiography, originally published in Hebrew in 1999 and translated by Zenatti as *Histoire d'une vie* (2004): 'Sans langue, tout n'est que chaos, confusion et peurs infondées'.[202] His grappling with language (and lack thereof) is clearly demonstrated in his diary, composed of 'une mosaïque de mots allemands, Yiddish, hébreux et même ruthènes'.[203] As Dinah Assouline Stillman notes, '[h]is four spoken languages, which had helped him survive during the Shoah, did not help him integrate in the Zionist Youth Movement or the army. He became almost mute, confiding only in his diary, in broken sentences'.[204] In Appelfeld's own words (translated from Hebrew into French by Zenatti), '[l]es mots étaient les cris étouffés d'un adolescent de quatorze ans, une sorte d'aphasique qui avait perdu toutes les langues qu'il savait parler'.[205]

Zenatti can relate to this initial aphasiac period. In *Mensonges*, her autobiographical narrator recounts how, in spite of her best intentions, she wrote little down in her diary during the first year in Israel. This led to a 'trou noir dans ma mémoire', which partly resulted from a self-fulfilling prophecy:

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[202] Aharon Appelfeld, *Histoire d'une vie*, trans. by Valérie Zenatti (Paris: Olivier, 2004), p. 130.
[203] *Ibid*.
[204] Dinah Assouline Stillman, 'Encounters with Aharon Appelfeld', *World Literature Today*, 84 (2010), 20-23 (p. 21).
[205] Appelfeld, *Histoire d'une vie*, p. 130.

'j'avais dans l'idée que tout ce qui n'était pas écrit disparaissait de la mémoire et restait à jamais un mystère' (*M*, p. 27). Eventually, Valérie comes to master Hebrew, which leads to a re-mastering of writing in French. Once she takes ownership of Hebrew, she somewhat paradoxically reclaims her identity as a writer of French, and her diary becomes an obsession:

> Depuis que je me suis approprié l'hébreu, la capacité d'écrire en français m'est revenu, et je noircis chaque jour des pages de mon journal intime, parfois quinze ou vingt en une seule journée. Je conserve de la fin de mon enfance une obsession: écrire, tout noter, enregistrer en quelque sorte ma vie pour la revoir plus tard, et comprendre (*M*, pp. 34-35).

In this way, her journal becomes a personal archive in which, to quote Pierre Nora, '[l]e souvenir est passé tout entier dans sa reconstitution la plus minutieuse. C'est une mémoire enregistrée, qui délègue à l'archive le soin de se souvenir pour elle et démultiplie les signes où elle dépose'.[206]

After having served in the Israel Defense Forces (IDF), as recounted in Zenatti's autobiographical teenage novel *Quand j'étais soldate*, and then having studied

[206] Pierre Nora, 'Entre Mémoire et Histoire: La problématique des lieux', in *Les lieux de mémoire*, 3 vols, ed. by Pierre Nora (Paris: Gallimard, 1984), vol. I, pp. xvii-xlii (p. xxvi).

International Relations at the Hebrew University, Valérie returns to France. In Paris, Hebrew becomes a subject of study, a chosen hobby and an assimilated language, as opposed to an obligation or cause of embarrassment as it was experienced in Israel:

> Depuis mon retour en France, j'éprouve une joie immense à évoluer de nouveau dans une langue qui n'exige pas de moi d'effort particulier et dont les mots sont des alliés naturels. Mais, par un inévitable mouvement de balancier, l'hébreu, dont je me suis imprégnée pendant huit ans, m'est devenu nécessaire. Il a creusé en moi un espace sensible accessible uniquement avec ses mots, son rythme, sa musique, et dont l'étude me comble (*M*, pp. 45-46).

Thus it is in France, back where she encountered the Shoah for the first time as an eight-year-old through an Anglophone television series that Valérie discovers the Hebrew writings of Aharon Appelfeld, who escaped a concentration camp at the same age. Her reading list for 'l'agrégation d'hébreu' in 2002 includes the book of Jonah from the Tanakh; the writings of cultural Zionist Asher Tsvi Ginsberg; 'des contes du prix Nobel Shaï Agnon'; poems by Israeli peace activist Dahlia Ravikovitch; 'et enfin [...] un roman, *Le Temps des prodiges*, d'Aharon Appelfeld' (*M*, p. 45).

Although defined as a novel, Valérie points out that the latter work is comprised of two extended short stories, 'aux titres distincts et évocateurs': '*Le Temps des prodiges*, donc, et *Après que tout eut lieu et au terme de nombreuses années*' (*M*, p. 48). The first *nouvelle* is written in the first person by the twelve-year-old protagonist and depicts a journey across the countryside in which, as Gila Ramras-Rauch remarks, '[t]he impending Holocaust is already apparent in the seemingly unimportant elements introduced: the registration, the trains, the movement'.[207] The second *nouvelle* sees the protagonist return to his place of birth following the Shoah, in an attempt to re-establish a link with his father who survived the catastrophe.[208] These sections are separated not only by the shift in narrative voice, but also by the stark blankness of a dividing page. As Zenatti writes, '[e]ntre les deux, une page blanche: seule évocation possible de ce qui se passa *lorsque tout eut lieu*' (*M*, p. 48). David Danow comments that the title of the second section, which is translated into English as 'Many Years Later When Everything Was Over',

> marks not only the compositional transition between the first and second parts of the novel but also signifies the monumental, barely

[207] Ramras-Rauch, *Aharon Appelfeld: The Holocaust and Beyond* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1994), p. 146.

[208] See Ramras-Rauch, *Aharon Appelfeld: The Holocaust and Beyond*, pp. 145-48.

> comprehensible passage encompassed by the terms Before and After. It is thus incumbent upon the reader to approach this novel [...] already cognizant of "everything," in order to be fully receptive to the ominous import of the characters' lyric reflections, as the novelist recalls a past that can never be re-called.[209]

Valérie is a reader 'already cognizant of "everything"', of 'ça' (*M*, p. 24), of 'ce qui se passa *lorsque tout eut lieu*' (*M*, p. 48), and is thus 'receptive' to the 'ominous import' of, for example, the first *nouvelle*'s closing words which she quotes in her own novella: '*Le lendemain, nous étions enchaînés dans un train de marchandise qui roulait vers le Sud*' (*M*, p. 47, original italics). Valérie describes this as 'une scène terrifiante' (*M*, p. 47). While the victims in the narrative are still ignorant of their fate, the reader (in this case Valérie) is all too aware; though she cannot re-call a past she has not experienced herself, it is a past which is nevertheless familiar to her.

After summarising passages from the text, which is written from the viewpoint of a child, Valérie concludes the chapter with her personal response to Appelfeld's *Le Temps des prodiges*:

> Je n'étudie pas: je lis.

[209] David K. Danow, 'Epiphany and Apocalypse in Holocaust Writing: Aharon Appelfeld', *Religion & Literature*, 29 (1997), 61-74 (p. 64).

> Je n'étudie pas: je suis traversée par une voix, des images, un mystère insondable derrière des phrases pourtant limpides. […]
>
> Je suis sous le choc de la découverte.
>
> On appelle cela une rencontre (*M*, pp. 48-49).

Each sentence forming a new paragraph for effect, the narrator demonstrates how Appelfeld's voice permeates her being and how his words resonate with her relationship both to Hebrew and to the Shoah, having first encountered it as a child. Each in its own way is appropriated and assimilated into her sense of self: as a Jew, as an Israeli, and as a writer. Zenatti states in an interview that, '[à] la lecture de *Temps de prodiges*, au moment où je préparais l'agrégation d'hébreu, j'ai ressenti une forme de grande admiration et j'étais extrêmement intriguée, j'avais le sentiment que derrière le texte il y avait un mystère à percer'.[210] In the same interview, Zenatti notes that she started to translate the book for herself in France before meeting its author in Israel.[211]

[210] Zenatti qtd. in Legrand, 'Carnet nomade avec Valérie Zenatti'.
[211] *Ibid*. The book was officially translated by Arlette Pierrot. Aharon Appelfeld, *Le Temps des prodiges*, trans. by Arlette Pierrot (Paris: Olivier, 2004).

Recounting the Rencontre

Valérie's first face-to-face encounter with Aharon is in the 'Little Jerusalem Cafe' of Ticho House in Jerusalem. This house belonged to the Israeli painter Anna Ticho and was left to the national Israel Museum when she died, henceforth becoming a cultural centre open to the public. The meeting between Valérie and Aharon is recounted in the chapter entitled 'La maison d'Anna Tikho, Jérusalem, 2004' in Zenatti's *Mensonges*. As with other chapters, the narrator Valérie sets the scene spatially and temporally, in this case not only in the chapter's title but also in its opening paragraph:

> Chaque pas sur la rue en pente du Rav Kook m'éloigne de la rumeur de la ville, où la peur des attentats est toujours présente en ce printemps. Depuis l'année 2000, lorsque je viens ici, j'évite les bus et le centre-ville (*M*, p. 51).

Ticho House is found on Rav Kook (or HaRav Kuk) street, which is named after the first Ashkenazi chief rabbi of British Mandate Palestine. The chapter is situated temporally during the Second Intifada (2000-2005), known for its infamous suicide attacks, hence the narrator's avoidance of public transport and of the city centre. After setting the scene, Valérie positions herself in relation to 'son héros':

> J'ai trente-quatre ans, je suis mère de deux enfants, [...] je suis une femme à la voix mal assurée, qui [...] ne sait que dire parce que c'est la première fois qu'elle se trouve face à l'homme qui l'impressionne le plus au monde [...] un petit homme de soixante-douze ans [...] qui a connu toute la palette de ce que peut vivre un être, dans ses plus infimes nuances, du meilleur au pire (*M*, pp. 53-54).

In speaking of Aharon as her hero, Valérie is alluding to the *Figure Libre* series of which her novella forms a part. Valérie writes that '[c]omme tout vrai héros, il s'intéresse aux autres' (*M*, p. 54), and goes on to recount how Aharon begins the conversation, in Hebrew, by asking Valérie about herself in the form of short but considered questions:

> Où est-tu née?
> Où sont nés tes parents?
> Où as-tu appris à parler si bien hébreu?
> On m'a dit que tu écrivais toi aussi. Qu'écris-tu?
> Pourquoi as-tu eu envie de traduire ces livres? (*M*, p. 55)

Valérie's life can be summarised in the answers to these questions: born in France of North African Jewish parents, with whom she immigrated to Israel where she learnt Hebrew, she is a writer on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, who chose to translate an Israeli Shoah-survivor's novels from Hebrew to

French because they spoke to her of that which she could not articulate. Following this gentle interrogation, the narrator writes, 'j'ose en poser [des questions] moi aussi, [et] l'échange devient conversation' (*M*, p. 55). As Zenatti states in an interview regarding her first meeting with Appelfeld, 'il est toujours très curieux de savoir d'où les gens viennent, quelle est l'histoire de leurs parents, quel est leur lien avec les livres, avec la langue, avec la vie et c'est par ces questions qu'il m'a finalement donné confiance'.[212]

With hindsight, Valérie reflects upon how this conversation might be perceived from an outsider's point of view:

> de l'extérieur, nous sommes un vieil homme au regard vif et une jeune femme que l'on pourrait prendre pour un grand-père et sa petite-fille ou pour un écrivain israélien et une journaliste venue l'interviewer, ou même, en tendant l'oreille, pour un écrivain et sa traductrice en langue française. En réalité, il se passe là quelque chose que personne ne peut distinguer à part lui, peut-être, et moi, plus tard, car les mots et la prise de conscience qui les accompagne viennent toujours à contrecoup des émotions et des sensations. Il n'y a pas de vieil homme, pas de jeune femme, cette image est un leurre et recouvre un autre tableau, plus juste, plus vrai, invisible comme la vérité

[212] Zenatti qtd. in Legrand, 'Carnet nomade avec Valérie Zenatti'.

> nue des enfants perdus dans les bois (*M*, pp. 55-56).

Each of the novella's previous chapters is alluded to in the above passage: the opening chapters in which Valérie reconstructs the Shoah in France, and imagines herself as the granddaughter of a survivor when in Israel (*M*, pp. 17-35), along with the following chapters in which she recounts her trip to Auschwitz as a journalist (*M*, pp. 37-44), and her encounter with Appelfeld through his Hebrew writing (*M*, pp. 45-49).

In the above quotation, at first the narrator suggests that the most accurate is the final assumption: that Aharon is a writer and that Valérie is his French translator. After all, she admits that '[j]e connais [...] de la façon la plus intime qui soit deux de ses livres, qui vont être publiés en France: *Histoire d'une vie* et *L'Amour, soudain*' (*M*, p. 53). Yet, her conclusion is not so rooted in the supposedly concrete *évidence* of a meeting between an elderly man who happens to be a writer and a young woman who happens to be his translator. She rejects this 'image' of reality as an illusion that (re)covers another tableau or scene, which, if not real or even visible, is nevertheless 'plus juste, plus vrai, invisible comme la vérité nue des enfants perdus dans les bois' (*M*, p. 56). As Appelfeld himself states in an interview, '[i]magination is sometimes more true than the truth.

Imagination is the depth of your feelings'.[213] These words echo a sentiment expressed in his autobiography, which Zenatti renders in French as '[l]a mémoire et l'imagination vivent parfois sous le même toit'.[214] It is this like-truth or truth-truer-than-truth that Zenatti's narrator explores in the final section of the novella, under the subtitle 'Silence'. This resonates with Shoshana Felman and Dori Laub's evocative description of testimonial literature as an articulation of 'truths that are unspoken – or unspeakable – and that are yet inscribed in texts'.[215] As Zenatti states in an interview, '[o]utre le processus de création littéraire, ce livre veut capter le cœur d'une vraie rencontre. Quels que soient l'âge et l'expérience de vie, c'est toujours la rencontre de deux enfants…'.[216] She echoes this sentiment in another interview: 'c'est vraiment l'histoire d'une rencontre non seulement littéraire, mais une vraie rencontre dans une vie, une rencontre qui est fondamentale presque'.[217] For Zenatti, there is a truth to this ageless, almost mystical encounter between two souls returning to their childhood and meeting one another there.

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[213] Aharon Appelfeld qtd. in Ben Naparstek, 'Silence is the Highest Language: An Interview with Aharon Appelfeld', *Tikkun*, 21 (2006), 65-68 (p. 66).
[214] Appelfeld trans. by Zenatti, *Histoire d'une vie*, p. 7.
[215] Shoshana Felman and Dori Laub, *Testimony: Crises of Witnessing in Literature, Psychoanalysis and History* (London and New York: Routledge, 1992), p. xiii-iv.
[216] Zenatti qtd. in E., 'Valérie Zenatti: "Mensonges"'.
[217] Zenatti qtd. in Legrand, 'Carnet nomade avec Valérie Zenatti'.

In his review of *Mensonges*, Norbert Czarny writes of the final section:

> Un conte intitulé « Silence », rappelant à la fois les lectures d'enfance de la jeune Valérie – *Les Misérables* surtout – et l'univers d'Appelfeld, clôt ce petit livre. C'est un exercice d'admiration, une façon de se laisser traverser par la prose du maître et ami; c'est aussi une manière pour la romancière de parler en son nom propre, sans s'inventer une autre histoire.[218]

As Czarny suggests, the girl in the wood carrying a pail (*M*, p 59) recalls Victor Hugo's Cosette in *Les Misérables*.[219] Yet there are clear differences to this canonical novel: there is no hierarchy (or patriarchy), no superior or authoritative (paternal) figure, no distancing 'vous'. The boy Erwin walks alongside her, not ahead of her and, rather than freeing her from her burden, he carries it with her, 'la présence de la main toute proche de la sienne, sur l'anse' (*M*, p. 61).[220] Erwin speaks through this silent yet communicative gesture, sharing the load rather than removing it. He is not a paternal figure like Jean Valjean, with the

[218] Norbert Czarny, 'D'une langue à l'autre', *La Quinzaine littéraire*, 1041 (2011), 9-10 (p. 10).

[219] See Victor Hugo, *Les Misérables*, 3 vols (Paris: Garnier-Flammarion, 1966), vol. I, chapter V, 'La petite toute seule', pp. 419-28; and vol. I, chapter VII, 'Cosette côte à côte dans l'ombre avec l'inconnu', pp. 429-32.

[220] This differs from Jean Valjean's actions in relation to Cosette: 'il était allé à l'enfant, et avait pris silencieusement l'anse du seau'. Hugo, *Les Misérables*, vol. I, p. 428.

strength and power to take the strain and carry Valérie to safety, but rather a friend or spiritual brother who shares the load and shows her where to hide. As they settle into their temporary refuge, Erwin says to Valérie, 'Tu es ma sœur et je ne te laisserai pas mourir' (*M*, p. 78), echoing her words to him: 'Je veux que tu vives, Erwin, je veux que tu vives' (*M*, p. 72). As opposed to the father-daughter relationship between Jean Valjean and Cosette, the brother-sister relationship between Erwin and Valérie is premised on equality, reciprocity, and mutual protection.

As for the allusions to 'l'univers d'Appelfeld', the most prominent intertextual references are to *Le Garçon qui voulait dormir* (2011) and *Tsili* (1989). Zenatti's translation of *Le Garçon qui voulait dormir* was published the same year as *Mensonges*. Written in the first person, it tells the story of Erwin, a boy 'submersed in an ongoing state of slumber that is periodically interrupted by gradually growing intervals of wakefulness',[221] as he travels to a transit camp in Italy and eventually to a kibbutz in British Mandate Palestine along with other Shoah survivors. Although the novel is not explicitly autobiographical, it is significant that Erwin is Aharon's original, Germanic, 'Christian'

[221] Rina Dudai, 'From Excess to Origin: Traversing Time Zone as an Act of Redemption in The Man who Never Stopped Sleeping', *Yod*, 19 (2014), <http://yod.revues.org/2177> [accessed 25 May 2016] (para 3 of 23).

name,[222] the name which Zenatti opts for in the final section of *Mensonges*. Moreover, the references to sleep in her novella echo passages in *Le Garçon qui voulait dormir*, where it is depicted as an escape from the outside world. The difference is that, for Valérie and Erwin in *Mensonges*, these are moments of intercorporeality rather than of solitude: '[l]e garçon ôte sa veste et tous deux se recroquevillent sous le tissu comme s'ils allaient disparaître l'un dans l'autre, essayant de préserver la chaleur entre eux. Ils s'endorment' (*M*, p. 62); 'ils sont soudés l'un à l'autre, et sombrent au même instant dans le sommeil' (*M*, p. 79). Here they are knit together intersubjectively; 'l'un' and 'l'autre' are interchangeable as they provide mutual shelter for one another with no gender or age hierarchy.

Appelfeld's *Tsili*, meanwhile, recounts the story of a mentally disabled Jewish teenage girl who is abandoned by her family when they flee the Nazis and who subsequently seeks refuge in the forest, where she learns to survive primitively and intuitively among the animals and peasants. A third of the way through the book, she encounters a Jewish man,[223] and they subsequently provide companionship for one another, hiding in the forest together for the

[222] See Aharon Appelfeld, *Le Garçon qui voulait dormir*, trans. by Valérie Zenatti (Paris: Olivier, 2011), pp. 65-66, 250.
[223] Aharon Appelfeld, *Tsili*, trans. by Arlette Pierrot (Paris: Olivier, 1983), pp. 53-56.

duration of the war, much as Erwin and Valérie do in *Mensonges*. In an interview, Appelfeld admits to having tried 'several times to write my story... and I could not write it. Then, suddenly, through a girl, not a boy, a bit older than I was, I found a new perspective. [...] *Tzili* is really my story, my inner story'.[224] As Stillman notes, '[t]he character of Tsili was the device that enabled him to narrate for the first time his inexpressible experience as a child hiding in the forests'.[225] Zenatti speaks in a similar way to Appelfeld about the writing process of *Mensonges* and about how she struggled to find her own voice:

> écrire ce livre n'était pas chose simple parce que j'ai eu beaucoup de mal à trouver la porte d'entrée, je ne savais pas […] avec quelle voix je devais écrire ce livre. Et l'illumination est venue lorsque j'ai décidé de prendre ma voix d'Aharon Appelfeld. Donc la voix d'Aharon Appelfeld en français c'est moi, sous cette voix-là j'ai placé ma propre voix à travers des fragments autobiographiques que je raconte […].[226]

Zenatti begins by assuming Appelfeld's voice (or at least a translated, frenchified version), upon which she superimposes her own

[224] Ramras-Rauch, *Aharon Appelfeld: The Holocaust and Beyond*, p. 105.
[225] Stillman, 'Encounters with Aharon Appelfeld', p. 22.
[226] Zenatti qtd. in Legrand, 'Carnet nomade avec Valérie Zenatti'.

(without diminishing or erasing his). In this way, she combines biography and autobiography, memory and postmemory, witness and translation in a palimpsestic way. It is not until the final section that she finds her most authentic voice, somewhat paradoxically in a fictional account which transcends concrete time and space, staging an encounter of herself and Aharon/Erwin as children in a forest:

> [...] et puis ensuite j'ai trouvé une autre voix beaucoup plus intime pour raconter ce qui nous unit dans le silence de notre relation parce que Aharon est quelqu'un de très réservé avec qui j'ai une relation à la fois intime et assez silencieuse finalement et ce qui existe dans le silence de cette relation c'est… ce sont deux enfants, lui et moi, abolissant le temps puisqu'on n'a pas été enfants au même moment mais deux enfants qui ont été un peu malmenés par la vie, voire beaucoup et qui trouvent du réconfort l'un chez l'autre.[227]

The repetition of 'intime', 'relation', and 'silence' highlight the importance of these concepts to the final section of *Mensonges*, in which the two child protagonists communicate in a language which is beyond words. As Stillman writes, Appelfeld 'learned to appreciate silence and contemplation in the forests and to mistrust words, which can be

[227] *Ibid*.

false',[228] and Zenatti attempts to emulate this in her novella. The extended periods of silence give more weight to what is said and what is not said in the instances of verbal communication which appear in the final section, notably in relation to age and names:

> « Tu t'appelles comment? » demande-t-elle.
>
> Il détourne la tête.
>
> « Erwin était mon nom.
>
> - Et maintenant? »
>
> Il pose un doigt sur ses lèvres.
>
> « Il ne faut pas trop parler », dit-il (*M*, p. 63).

> « Tu n'as pas huit ans, dit-elle.
>
> - Oui et non. Comme toi.
>
> - Sommes-nous encore des enfants? » demande-t-elle.
>
> Il ne répond pas. Elle croit voir des larmes au bord de ses yeux (*M*, pp. 64-65).

The words in the first passage echo the dialogue between Jean Valjean and Cosette in *Les Misérables*: '– Petite, quel age as-tu? – Huit ans, monsieur'.[229] Cosette is the same age as Aharon when he is directly confronted with the Shoah and as Valérie when she indirectly encounters the Shoah for the first time. There is a sense that Aharon is eternally a child, defined by his traumatic experience of the war years, which resurface through the

[228] Stillman, 'Encounters with Aharon Appelfeld', p. 22.
[229] Hugo, *Les Misérables*, vol. I, p. 429.

senses, as described in his autobiography *Histoire d'une vie*:

> Il suffit parfois de l'odeur d'un plat, de l'humidité des chaussures ou d'un bruit soudain pour me ramener au plus profond de la guerre, et il me semble alors qu'elle n'a pas pris fin, qu'elle s'est poursuivie à mon insu, et à présent qu'on m'a réveillé, je sais que depuis qu'elle a commencé elle n'a pas connu d'interruption.[230]

Significantly, once known as Erwin, he took on the name Janek while hiding in the Carpathian forest,[231] before being 'christened' with the Hebrew name Aharon upon arrival in British Mandate Palestine as a young Shoah survivor in 1946.[232]

Memory (Trans)Formation and the Nation-State

Even before encountering Aharon Appelfeld in his writings and then in person, Valérie describes how, having immigrated to Israel at a similar age to him when he first arrived in the land, she pretends that her grandparents are Shoah survivors, as laid out in the chapter entitled 'Beer-Sheva (désert du Néguev),

[230] Appelfeld, *Histoire d'une vie*, p. 110.
[231] See Nili Gold, 'Aharon Appelfeld in Conversation with Nili Gold: University of Pennsylvania, October 2011', *Jewish Quarterly Review*, 103 (2013), 434-445 (pp. 437, 442, 445).
[232] See Appelfeld, *Le Garçon qui voulait dormir*, pp. 65-66, 250.

Israël, 1985'. It is worth noting Valérie's geographical and temporal position(ing) as indicated in the chapter's title. As Yehouda Shenhav points out in *The Arab Jews: A Postcolonial Reading of Nationalism, Religion, and Ethnicity* (2006), the Negev desert was where Jews from Islamic countries, including Algeria and Tunisia, awaited 'settlement' in 'transit camps' for one to two years, while 'European Jews would reside in immigrant camps for a period of up to three months'.[233] Shenhav argues that '[t]he ethnicity-based geographical division established the intra-Jewish ethnic identity as a meaningful and distinct factor, and also as a problem in the structure of Israeli society ever since'.[234] Valérie's position in time in this chapter is also significant: the meeting takes place after the Six-Day War (also known as the 1967 Arab-Israeli War), and the Yom Kippur or Ramadan War (also known as the 1973 Arab-Israeli War), but before the First and Second Intifadas (late 1980s/early 1990s and 2000s). Perhaps most significantly for our discussion here, Israel had by this stage integrated (European) Shoah memory into its (Zionist) national identity, following the Eichmann Trial in an Israeli court in Jerusalem. This event had broken '[y]ears of

[233] Yehouda Shenhav, *The Arab Jews: A Postcolonial Reading of Nationalism, Religion, and Ethnicity* (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 2006), p. 32.
[234] *Ibid.*

organized silence'[235] and, as Arendt notes in her seminal analysis, was based on 'the principle of passive personality – that the victims were Jews and that only Israel was entitled to speak in their names'.[236]

In her contribution to *Conflict, Memory Transfers and the Reshaping of Europe* (2010), Assmann identifies 'four models for dealing with a traumatic past', namely: 'dialogic forgetting'; 'remembering in order to never forget'; 'remembering in order to forget'; and 'dialogic remembering'.[237] These models, she argues, are 'devised and applied to cope with a traumatic legacy of the past and to forge a new beginning'.[238] Similarly, Daniel Levy and Natan Sznaider recognise three stages for dealing with the traumatic past of the European Shoah,[239] which loosely coincide with those identified by Assmann, though she goes a step further to introduce 'dialogic remembering' as a synthetic (and somewhat speculative) fourth stage.[240] Levy

[235] Idith Zertal, *Israel's Holocaust and the Politics of Nationhood* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), p. 93.
[236] Hannah Arendt, *Eichmann in Jerusalem* (London: Faber and Faber, 1963), p. 239.
[237] See Assmann, 'From Collective Violence to a Common Future', pp. 8-22.
[238] *Ibid*., p. 20.
[239] See Daniel Levy and Natan Sznaider, *Human Rights and Memory* (University Park, Pa.: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2010); Daniel Levy and Natan Sznaider, *The Holocaust and Memory in the Global Age*, trans. by Assenka Oksiloff (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2006); and Daniel Levy and Natan Sznaider, 'Memory Unbound: The Holocaust and the Formation of Cosmopolitan Memory', *European Journal of Social Theory,* 5 (2002), 87-106.
[240] Assmann, 'From Collective Violence to a Common Future', pp. 9, 17-22.

and Sznaider situate the first stage in the postwar years, which favoured 'silencing memories of the Holocaust', and corresponds with what Assmann terms 'dialogic forgetting'.[241] It is important to note that these years saw not only the Nuremberg Trials (1945-1946), but also the establishment of the United Nations (1945), and the subsequent foundation of Israel (1948) which, like many European countries at the time, favoured 'forward-looking memory', to use Levy and Sznaider's term.[242] The second stage is situated in the 1960s-1980s, marked by the mediatised Eichmann Trial (1961), the ideologically justified Six-Day War (1967), the unforeseen Yom Kippur War (1973), and the aforementioned American television series *Holocaust* (1978). According to Levy and Sznaider, it is in this period that 'the iconographic formation of the Holocaust' was established both in Europe and Israel.[243] The mandate of this period, in the words of Assmann, was 'remembering in order to never forget'.[244] The third stage is situated in the post-Cold War period, in which the European Union was founded (1993) and the Yugoslav Wars raged (1991-2001). What emerged was the ideology of 'remembering in order to forget' to use Assmann's phrasing or, as Levy and Sznaider would have it, 'cosmopolitan

[241] *Ibid*., pp. 9-11.
[242] Levy and Sznaider, 'Memory Unbound', p. 94.
[243] *Ibid*., p. 95.
[244] Assmann, 'From Collective Violence to a Common Future', pp. 13-17.

memory', which they optimistically define as 'a model of national self-criticism, spreading human rights as the legitimizing principle of global society'.[245]

The first model, then, is 'forgetting', which Assmann defines as 'but another expression for "silence"',[246] and is situated in the postwar years, during which Aharon arrives in British Mandate Palestine. In his autobiography, translated by Zenatti, Appelfeld demonstrates how this silence was both outwardly imposed and self-inflicted: 'les rescapés n'étaient pas les seuls à vouloir refouler les épreuves endurées. Le monde extérieur aussi exigeait d'eux qu'ils se renient et renient les souvenirs qu'ils avaient emportés'.[247] '« Nous sommes venus en Israël pour construire et être construits »' was the order of the day and for Shoah survivors this translated as 'l'anéantissement de la mémoire'.[248] In line with the Zionist conviction that 'nous devons être des travailleurs de la terre et des combattants', Aharon attempted to forget his past first

[245] *Ibid*., pp. 12-13. Levy and Sznaider qtd. in Aleida Assmann, 'The Holocaust – a Global Memory? Extensions and Limits of a New Memory Community', in *Memory in a Global Age*, ed. by Aleida Assmann, and Sebastian Conrad (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), pp. 97-118 (p. 106).
[246] Assmann, 'From Collective Violence to a Common Future', p. 10.
[247] Appelfeld, *Histoire d'une vie*, p. 203.
[248] *Ibid*., p. 141. See also p. 167. These words are echoed in Appelfeld's later novel *Le Garçon qui voulait dormir* which includes the chant: '*Nous sommes venus bâtir le pays et pour être construits par lui*'. Appelfeld, *Le Garçon qui voulait dormir*, p. 201.

through agricultural work,[249] and then through integration into the army, convinced that '[c]ela effacera en moi une bonne fois pour toutes les blessures et les vexations dont j'ai souffert'.[250] The agricultural work was provided by Alyat Hanoar, defined in the book's glossary as a Zionist organisation whose mission 'était d'encadrer l'immigration d'enfants et d'adolescents vers la Palestine mandataire et de les former à la vie pionnière dans des structures parallèles aux kibboutzim'.[251] In a sense, this could be seen as a kind of *mission civilisatrice*. As Aharon writes, '[à] la Alyat Hanoar, le slogan écrit et non écrit était: Oublie, prends racine, parle hébreu, améliore ton apparence, cultive ta virilité'.[252] Aharon describes how this directive was absorbed into the psyche of many Shoah survivors of his generation in order to facilitate their integration into the forward-looking Israeli society of that time. In describing '[a]ttitudes toward the Holocaust in Israeli society' which have changed over time, Yair Auron writes that

> [d]uring the years immediately following World War II, the role of the Holocaust in public life remained relatively shrouded. In the late 1940s, Jewish society in Palestine, and subsequently Israel, was immersed in

[249] See Appelfeld, *Histoire d'une vie*, pp. 143-45.
[250] *Ibid*., p. 154. For more on this, see pp. 152-56.
[251] *Ibid*., p. 237.
[252] *Ibid*., p. 167.

> an existential struggle for a state that was born during war.[253]

The emphasis here was on self-preservation and national security, yet a sense of existential threat has since pervaded Israeli society, and re-emerged in fears of a 'second holocaust'.

According to Assmann, the initial period of 'dialogic forgetting', both outwardly enforced and inwardly imposed, came to an end with the Eichmann Trial, which exemplifies the second model, namely 'remembering in order to never forget'.[254] Auron writes that

> [m]emories of the Holocaust burst into public consciousness with the trial of Adolf Eichmann in Jerusalem in the early 1960s. Indeed, an important goal of the trial was to expose the Holocaust, its consequences, and its lessons to Israeli society as a whole and to the younger generation in particular.[255]

The trial was a turning point within the politics of memory in Israel, and had a similar effect to that of the American television series *Holocaust* in the United States and Europe. Assmann elucidates:

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[253] Yair Auron, *Israeli Identities: Jews and Arabs Facing the Self and the Other*, trans. by Geremy Forman (New York; Oxford: Berghahn Books, 2012), p. 98.
[254] Assmann, 'From Collective Violence to a Common Future', pp. 12-13.
[255] Auron, *Israeli Identities*, p. 98.

> The paradigmatic shift from the model of *forgetting* to an orientation towards *remembering* occurred with the return of Holocaust memory after a period of latency. This memory returned in various steps. In the 1960s, it re-emerged together with images of the Eichmann trial in Jerusalem which were projected into a transnational public arena. The televised event transformed the silenced memories of Israeli and diasporic Jewish families into a new ethnic community of memory. After the broadcasting of the American television series "Holocaust" in 1978, the impact of this event spilled over to those who had no share in the historical experience but joined the memory community on the basis of empathy.[256]

The Eichmann Trial in Israel can be compared to the airing of the American television series *Holocaust* in French, in that it is 'un événement national' (*M*, p. 21) and catalyst for anamnesia, though arguably on a larger scale with more significant consequences. In *Mensonges*, Valérie and her mother join the transnational 'memory community' from their French living room and later become part of the Israeli collective, which had come to see Shoah memory as fundamental to its existence, largely due to the Eichmann Trial. As Idith Zertal notes in *Israel's Holocaust and*

[256] Assmann, 'From Collective Violence to a Common Future', p. 12.

the Politics of Nationhood (2010), 'the Eichmann event [...] turned out to be a landmark in the process of the organized, explicit mobilization of the Holocaust in the service of Israeli politics and state policy, especially in the Israeli-Arab conflict'.[257] Thus, Zertal argues, '[t]he Eichmann trial was [...] a most adequate occasion for the establishment of renewed national unity through memory'.[258] Shohat explains how, within this logic of 'national unity', 'Jews are defined as closer to each other than to the cultures of which they have been a part' and thus 'Mizrahim (Orientals)' are pressured 'to realign their Jewish identity according to Zionist Euro-Israel paradigms',[259] which includes absorption of Shoah memory. Hence Valérie rejects her Algerian/Tunisian heritage and invents Shoah-survivor grandparents as a legitimising cover-up upon arrival in Israel.

Levy and Sznaider argue that '[o]n the background of the Eichmann trial and the six-day war in 1967, the Holocaust assumed a new and prominent role in Israel's political culture', more specifically '[i]t became a symbol for existential fears and the necessity to construct and maintain a strong military state'.[260] As Auron notes, '[i]t was the weeks of waiting that led up to the Six Days [*sic*]

[257] Zertal, *Israel's Holocaust and the Politics of Nationhood*, p. 99.
[258] *Ibid*., p. 104.
[259] Ella Shohat, *Taboo Memories, Diasporic Voices* (Durham, N.C.; London: Duke University Press, 2006), p. 215.
[260] Levy and Sznaider, 'Memory Unbound', p. 96.

War and the fear of annihilation then threatening Israel that caused the memory of the Holocaust to emerge forcefully in Israel and the Diaspora'.[261] Although he makes no mention of the Eichmann Trial, Appelfeld refers to the Six-Day War in his autobiography. In particular, he writes of how it was regarded within the association 'La vie nouvelle', founded in 1950 by Shoah survivors from Bukovina/Galicia in Eastern Europe:[262]

> À la veille de la guerre des Six Jours, une grande agitation régnait au club. Certains membres qui n'avaient pas parlé pendant des années, ou parlaient peu, s'inquiétaient de la catastrophe qui, selon eux, approchait, mais la majeure partie du club était contre cet état d'esprit. « On ne peut pas comparer les époques, affirmaient-ils. À présent nous avons une armée qui viendra à bout de l'ennemi ».[263]

The use of the term 'catastrophe' is significant here; it is the translation of the Hebrew word for what is often referred to in English as the Holocaust, *Shoah*, which has also been adopted into the French language. This suggests anxiety (*inquiétude*) and fear of a 'second holocaust', this time on a national scale, an 'existential fear' to use Levy and

[261] Auron, *Israeli Identities*, p. 98.
[262] Appelfeld, *Histoire d'une vie*, p. 219.
[263] *Ibid*., p. 225.

Sznaider's terminology.[264] And yet this is not a view shared by the majority of the Shoah-survivor 'club', who have faith in the army to defend them against 'l'ennemi', in keeping with the idea of 'the necessity to [...] maintain a strong military state'.[265] They use the language of victory (*venir à bout*) which had already permeated Hebrew since the Israeli War of Independence (or 1948 Arab-Israeli War) when they defeated their Arab 'enemies' against all odds after declaring statehood.

Neither Assmann nor Levy and Sznaider refer to the Yom Kippur War (or 1974 Arab-Israeli War) as crucial to the second model of 'remembering in order to never forget' in Israel. This is something Appelfeld draws attention to in his autobiography where he situates himself in relation to the Yom Kippur War in the opening words of a chapter dedicated to this event: 'Pendant la guerre du Kippour, j'étais maître de conférences détaché auprès du département militaire de l'éducation. Nous étions en poste près du canal' (that is, the Suez Canal).[266] Whereas when addressing the Six-Day War he leaves out any reference to his own response, in the chapter on the Yom Kippur War Appelfeld speaks of his personal reaction:

[264] Levy and Sznaider, 'Memory Unbound', p. 96.
[265] *Ibid*.
[266] Appelfeld, *Histoire d'une vie*, p. 200.

> Cette guerre soudaine avait fait ressurgir en moi, et pas seulement en moi, les craintes de la Seconde Guerre mondiale. Le sujet flottait et remontait à la surface à chaque rencontre. Les jeunes soldats s'intéressaient aux moindres détails, comme s'ils essayaient de se rapprocher de ces années mystérieuses. Les questions n'étaient pas idéologiques, comme auparavant, ni irritantes de supériorité, mais s'intéressaient aux faits, avec une bonne mesure d'empathie.[267]

Appelfeld describes how '[l]es enfants de rescapés' in particular wanted to know more about the Shoah as a result of the Yom Kippur War.[268]

There is a shift from being judgmental and ashamed of Shoah survivors to being attentive and empathetic: 'Peu de temps auparavant on dérangeait les rescapés (pour ne pas dire qu'on les agaçait) avec toutes sortes de questions stériles: pourquoi ne vous êtes-vous pas révoltés et pourquoi avez-vous été conduits comme du bétail à l'abattoir?'[269] As Appelfeld states in an interview with Phillip Roth,

> [d]uring the 1940's one had a feeling that one was being reborn here as a Jew [...]. Let's not forget that this was after the Holocaust. To be strong was

[267] *Ibid*., p. 200.
[268] *Ibid*., pp. 200, 203.
[269] *Ibid*., p. 201.

> not merely a matter of ideology. "Never again like sheep to the slaughter" thundered from loudspeakers at every corner.[270]

In his autobiography, Appelfeld describes the shift from accusation to empathy in the Israeli perception of the Shoah in relation to the Yom Kippur War: 'Auparavant on accusait les rescapés d'aveuglement, d'auto-illusion, mais à présent, sur les rives du Canal, le mot « illusion » revêtait un autre visage. Même un service de renseignement aussi bon que le nôtre n'avait pas prévu, avait fait illusion'.[271] This realisation leads to a change in attitude: 'les soldats n'étaient plus des individus abreuvés de certitudes et d'orgueil, mais des jeunes gens qui savaient que la vie offre parfois des surprises difficiles, comme cette guerre, et qu'on ne pouvait juger facilement […] les êtres humains'.[272] In the closing words of the chapter, Appelfeld writes: 'Le combat était certes différent ici, et pourtant l'antique malédiction nous poursuivait toujours'.[273] Here he establishes a link between anti-Semitism in Europe and existential threat in Israel, speaking of the

[270] Aharon Appelfeld qtd. in Phillip Roth, 'Walking the Way of the Survivor: A Talk with Aharon Appelfeld', *The New York Times*, 28 February 1988, <https://www.nytimes.com/books/98/02/15/home/appelfeld-roth.html> [accessed 27 April 2016].
[271] Appelfeld, *Histoire d'une vie*, p. 202.
[272] *Ibid*., p. 203.
[273] *Ibid*., p. 204.

Jewish people as 'un peuple qui n'était désiré ni en Europe ni ici'.[274]

The (European) Shoah and the (Jewish) State

The use of the term 'Arab-Israeli' in the naming of war is significant. Due to the conflict between (Jewish) Zionist and (Arab) Palestinian nationalism, Jews from Arab countries, as David Sasha notes, 'had to choose between being Jews and being Arabs', between an Israeli or Arab identity, particularly following the establishment of the state of Israel.[275] Shasha argues that this was 'the first time in their history' that Jews of Arab countries had been faced with such a choice.[276] Similarly, Shohat writes that '[s]ince the beginnings of European Zionism, the Jews of Islam have faced, for the first time in their history, the imposed dilemma of choosing between Jewishness and Arabness'.[277] Yet this would be forgetting the Algerian Jews who had French citizenship, according to the Crémieux Decree (1870), and the Tunisian Jews who sought naturalisation, many of whom considered themselves among the 'civilized' French as seemingly

[274] *Ibid*., p. 204.
[275] David Shasha qtd. in Lynne Vittorio, 'The Jews of the Arab World: A Community Unto Itself', *Bint Jbeil*, 16 October 2002, <http://www.bintjbeil.com/articles/en/021016_arabjews.html> [accessed 16 February 2016].
[276] *Ibid*.
[277] Shohat, *Taboo Memories*, p. 215.

emancipated Jews (as opposed to the 'barbaric' Arabs, the majority of whom were of Muslim confession).[278]

Moreover, Shasha and Shohat arguably attribute too much agency to these 'Arab Jews', as often the choice was made for them. As Shohat herself notes, following the establishment of the State of Israel and 'prior to their "Exodus"' to this land, the 'Jewishness' of the Jewish minority in Arab countries was 'associated with Zionism' and as such was 'subjected to surveillance'.[279] Furthermore, in the words of Yonathan Mendel, there was a 'denial of Arab-Jewish identity within the Zionist movement and in the context of the conflict in Palestine/Israel',[280] and, as Shenhav writes, 'Arab Jews' was a 'joint category denied in standard Zionist language'.[281] More specifically, Shohat identifies that '[w]ithin Zionist discourse, Judeo-Arab culture was disdained as a sign of "*galut* (diaspora)" – a negative term within Euro-Israeli Zionist

[278] See Shohat, *Taboo Memories*, p. 344.
[279] Ella Shohat, 'Rupture and Return: Zionist Discourse and the Study of Arab Jews', *Social Text*, 21 (2003), 49-74 (p. 54); and Ella Shohat qtd. in Evelyn Azeeza Alsultany, 'Arab-Jews, Diaspora, and Multicultural Feminism: A Conversation with Ella Habiba Shohat', in *We are Iraqis: Aesthetics and Politics in a Time of War*, ed. by Nadje Al-Aliand and Deborah Al-Najjar (Syracuse, New York: Syracuse University Press, 2013), pp. 185-204 (p. 186).
[280] Yonathan Mendel, 'Re-Arabizing the De-Arabized: The Mista'aravim Unit of the Palmach', in *Debating Orientalism*, ed. by Ziad Elmarsafy, Anna Bernard, and David Attwell (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013), pp. 94-116 (p. 104).
[281] Shenhav, *The Arab Jews*, p. 53.

discourse'.[282] Yet Valérie does not fit neatly into the category of Arab Jew or Jew of Islam, as she did not immigrate from (Islamic) Algeria or Tunisia to (Jewish) Israel, but from (Catholic/*laïque*) France, where she was born of Franco-Maghrebi parents who had left colonial Algeria to join the French 'mother country'. In 'Entre-deux', Zenatti writes autobiographically:

> elle est née à Nice [...] d'un père né dans le département français d'Alger et d'une mère née en Tunisie d'un père né dans le département français de Constantine et d'une mère née en Tunisie, naturalisée française lorsqu'elle a contracté mariage avec ledit père.[283]

Her choice of narrative voice here is significant: by speaking of herself in the third person, she distances herself from her filial identity, in stark contrast to her adoption of Aharon Appelfeld's voice in the first person in *Mensonges*, which highlights her affiliative identity.

Valérie's parents' subsequent immigration to Israel from France with their family was not out of necessity, but out of choice, conviction, and perceived solidarity with the Jewish people and, to some extent, the Zionist dream. In *Mensonges*, Valérie describes how, when in Israel, 'je me détache

[282] Shohat, *Taboo Memories*, pp. 205-6.
[283] Zenatti, 'Entre-deux ', p. 110.

de moi, si lourde et pesante, contenant tant de fragments que je ne comprends pas, pour flotter dans une histoire que j'invente' (*M*, p. 29). As Desarthe notes in *Le Remplaçant*, 'raconte[r] des histoires [...] signifie parfois « mentir »'.[284] One of the fragments of Valérie's identity consists of 'une vague histoire de Juifs d'Afrique du Nord que je ne cherche pas à connaître, une histoire [...] de mes parents' (*M*, pp. 30-31). Instead of engaging with this history, Valérie prefers '[s]e taire, ne pas exister, se cacher' (*M*, p. 31). She thus covers up her family history and heritage by telling a different tale, a *récit d'affiliation* as opposed to (or as an extension of) a *récit de filiation*:

> je leur raconte [...] que, oui, je suis Française née de parents nés en France et non pas en terre arabe, comme tous ces Maurice, Jojo, Simone et Georgette qui prétendent être Français alors qu'ils sont nés au Maroc. Je suis *vraiment* française, moi (*M*, pp. 29-30).

There is some truth to this; after all Valérie is French 'by virtue of' being born in France, and her parents are officially French too, as Jews in Algeria had French citizenship when it was under French colonial rule, with the exception of the Vichy Regime. The Crémieux Decree of 1870 gave native Jews French citizenship alongside *pied-noirs* while

[284] Desarthe, *Le Remplaçant*, p. 72.

Muslims remained 'colonial subjects'.[285] This formed part of what historian Martin Evans describes as France's 'divide-and-rule policy that sought to differentiate Jews from Arabs and Berbers'.[286] In Valérie's re-telling, what Shipler terms the 'Judeo-Islamic civilizational space of North Africa'[287] is reduced to French Algeria, which includes Jews among its civilised citizens. In order to legitimise and validate her tale, Valérie includes reference to her father's country of birth, though it is an Algeria which is decidedly French, separate from any Algerian (national) or Arab (ethnic/cultural) identity:

> parfois, parce que je crains que mes parents ne dévoilent un jour la vérité sur leur naissance par une anecdote racontée à mes amies, je glisse que mes grands-parents ont fui pendant la Seconde Guerre mondiale en Algérie, parce que – j'insiste – l'Algérie, c'était la France, mais de l'autre côté de la Méditerranée (*M*, p. 32).

Valérie's wording recalls François Mitterrand's historic and infamous phrase,

[285] Farah Souames, 'Home, for Algeria's Jews, is elsewhere', *opendemocracy.net*, 27 February 2015, <https://www.opendemocracy.net/openglobalrights/farah-souames/home-for-algeria%E2%80%99s-jews-is-elsewhere> [accessed 16 March 2015] (para of 4 of 13).
[286] Martin Evans, 'Algeria's Jewish Question', *History Today*, 62 (2012), <http://www.historytoday.com/martin-evans/algeria%E2%80%99s-jewish-question#sthash.F4DVDU2b.dpuf> [accessed 18 March 2015].
[287] David K. Shipler, *Arab and Jew: Wounded Spirits in a Promised Land* (New York: Times Books, 1986), p. 224.

'l'Algérie, c'est la France'.[288] The use of the verb 'craindre' is indicative of the shame Valérie feels, while the verb 'dévoiler' points to her attempt to cover up the family secret, and the verb 'glisser' adds devious guile to her desperate deceitfulness, which is emphasised in the use of the verb 'insister'.

As David Shipler writes in *Arab and Jew: Wounded Spirits in a Promised Land*, originally published in 1986, a year after the events recounted in this chapter of *Mensonges* are situated,

> [s]ince Arabness has become a disability in Israeli values, [...] [m]any Sephardim try intensively to detach themselves from any cultural association with the Arabs, to divorce themselves from the object of Ashkenazi contempt. And so some of them denounce Arabs with ferocity.[289]

Valérie's insistence on a French identity, as demonstrated in the use of italics and the emphatic 'moi', is symptomatic of this ferocious denouncement of any connection to an Arab identity; she is in denial of her Mizrahiness for the sake of integration into Israeli society. This is further illustrated in the

[288] For a contemporary take on this, see Boualem Sansal, "'L'Algérie, c'est la France, et la France, c'est l'Algérie!'", *Marianne*, 6 December 2017, <https://www.marianne.net/debattons/tribunes/boualem-sansal-l-algerie-c-est-la-france-et-la-france-c-est-l-algerie> [accessed 20 April 2018].

[289] David K. Shipler, *Arab and Jew: Wounded Spirits in a Promised Land* (New York: Broadway Books, 2015 [1986]), p. 309.

shame she feels in relation to her maternal grandmother, whose Arabness is clearly displayed in the fact that she speaks Arabic better than French and wears 'un fichu noué de façon très suspecte sur ses cheveux gris' (*M*, p. 31):

> lorsqu'elle vient nous rendre visite, je dissimule la mère de ma mère [...]. J'élabore des stratagèmes très sophistiqués pour que mes amies ne viennent pas chez moi et lorsque nous croisons ensemble ma grand-mère au pied de l'immeuble, je parle vite, je lui coupe la parole, j'entraîne mes amies ailleurs, je transpire, je rougis, mais pourquoi diable s'entête-t-elle à parler dans sa langue maternelle, ne voit-elle pas qu'elle est en train de ruiner tous mes efforts pour m'intégrer à ce pays? (*M*, p. 31)

The use of the verb 'dissimuler' recalls the hidden rule: 'se cacher' as an Arab Jew in order to integrate into Israeli society with its bias to European hegemony, linked to identification with the (European) Shoah. Indeed, the use of the verb 'intégrer' is significant, containing resonances with (post-)colonial France.[290]

As Shipler writes, 'Jews from Morocco, Tunisia, Iraq, Syria, Egypt, and elsewhere in the Arab world want to be seen as Jews, not

[290] See Julia Resnik, 'Integration Without Assimilation? Ethno-nationalism in Israel and Universal Laïcité in France', *International Studies in Sociology of Education*, 20 (2010), 201-24.

Arabs, to be integrated into Israeli society as full members, not left by the Ashkenazi establishment on the periphery'.[291] Shohat, in a book on Israeli cinema, published in 1989 with the subtitle 'East/West and the Politics of Representation', contextualises this paradox of European hegemony (where European Jews or Ashkenazim are at the centre, and Arab Jews or Sephardim/Mizrahim are on the periphery) in spite of the diverse demography of Israel:

> The Palestinians [Arab Israelis] make up about 20 percent of the population, while the Sephardim, the majority of whom come, within very recent memory, from countries such as Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia, Egypt, Iraq, Iran, and India, countries generally regarded as forming part of the Third World, constitute another 50 percent of the population, thus giving a total of about 70 percent of the population as Third World or Third World-derived [...]. European hegemony in Israel, in this sense, is the product of a distinct numerical minority within the country, a minority in whose interest it is to deny Israel's "Easternness" as well as its "Third-Worldness".[292]

It is in this context that the teenage Valérie can embrace her Jewish identity in Israel but

[291] *Ibid*., p. 243.
[292] Ella Shohat, *Israeli Cinema: East/West and the Politics of Representation* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1989), p. 4.

fears being stigmatised due to her 'oriental' identity and familial or filial (if not affilial) connection to North Africa. As Shohat notes, while on the one hand the 'religion of Arab Jews [...] was now affiliated with the dominant power, equated with the very basis of national belonging', on the other hand '*affiliation* with an Arab cultural geography was [...] disciplined and punished' in Israel.[293] Thus, Valérie writes,

> ici être Juif ne pose pas problème parce que nous sommes en Israël. En revanche, la tension est grande autour du pays d'origine [...] j'ai très bien saisi qu'avouer des origines orientales (Maroc, Tunisie, Algérie, Lybie, Égypte, Yémen, Irak, tous dans le même sac) expose aux railleries, aux moqueries, aux commissures des lèvres qui s'affaissent et sont comme des coups de poignard (*M*, p. 30).

> En Israël donc, comme en France, je suis coupable d'appartenir à un groupe jugé inferieur, pour des raisons obscures. Bien sûr, les blessures infligées ne sont en rien comparables. Être Juif en Europe a pu condamner à mort, être Juif oriental en Israël peut exposer aux moqueries ou au mépris. Mais la blessure d'une supposée tare collective et incompressible est là (*M*, pp. 33-34).

[293] Shohat, 'Rupture and Return', p. 54, emphasis mine.

Here Valérie uses the term 'Juif oriental' to define herself as among the Mizrahi population with their origin in Arab countries, a numerical majority that nonetheless felt suppressed and marginalised upon immigration to Israel. Shohat writes of what she terms 'the Zionist denial of [...] the Jewish "Mizrahim" (the Eastern ones)' who, she claims, 'have been stripped of the right of self-representation'.[294] Shenhav uses the terms 'Arab Jews' and 'Mizrahim' interchangeably to refer to the 'category' of 'Jews from the Islamic countries as a whole'.[295] He also speaks of a collective voluntary denial among Arab Jews. Writing from personal experience, he states that '[d]enial is a concept in psychoanalysis, but it has a sociological context as well [...] the denial that I believed was a private experience was in fact a collective phenomenon'.[296]

Although she identifies herself within the collective term 'Juif oriental' and certainly can relate to this denial of any connection to Arab culture, Valérie cannot be so easily categorised as an Arab Jew according to Shenhav's definition, as she is not from an Islamic country, but a Christian (if not secular) one. She is of Algerian/Tunisian descent, not provenance or (religious) culture. In France, in order to fit in, 'je me rêvais catholique, pour avoir la paix, pour ressembler

[294] Shohat, *Israeli Cinema: East/West and the Politics of Representation*, p. 3.
[295] Shenhav, *The Arab Jews*, p. 15.
[296] *Ibid.*, p. 7.

à mes camarades' (*M*, p. 31). Similarly, in 'Entre-deux', here writing of herself in the third person, Zenatti states: 'Quelque chose lui murmure qu'être catholique, c'est mieux, c'est avoir tous les droits'.[297] In Israel, '[c]e pays qui est censé être le mien, mais où l'on me fait sentir que je n'ai pas la « bonne identité »', on the other hand, 'je me rêve petite-fille de déportés, c'est une sorte d'aristocratie à laquelle je voudrais pouvoir prétendre' (*M*, pp. 31-32). Zenatti describes in an interview how 'j'avais pas trop envie […] d'être juive aux yeux des autres' when at school in France.[298] In Israel, by contrast,

> être juif ne posait plus problème, en revanche être originaire d'Afrique du Nord pouvait très facilement vous cataloguer dans la catégories des gens incultes et sans éducation et donc ressentant cette forme de mépris, j'ai ressenti moi, le besoin de m'inventer une mémoire.[299]

Ashamed of her Algerian/Tunisian heritage, Valérie attempts to assimilate into Israeli society and to impress her Russian Jewish friends by identifying herself with the Shoah and inventing a familial connection to the catastrophe: 'J'invente un grand-père caché pendant la guerre dans une cave, un autre résistant, une grand-mère refugiée dans le Sud

[297] Zenatti, 'Entre-deux', p. 111.
[298] Zenatti qtd. in Legrand, 'Carnet nomade avec Valérie Zenatti'.
[299] *Ibid*.

de la France' (*M*, p. 32). In this way, Valérie's tale can be seen as a kind of 'autobiographical screen', in that it combines 'a special type of resistance to explorations of [...] personal history' and a '"personal myth" as defense and pattern of life'.[300] The idea of 'the autobiography as screen', posited by psychoanalyst Ernst Kris in his article 'The Personal Myth', draws from Freud's work on screen memories, and relates to how 'individuals use autobiographical memories [...] as a protective screen'.[301] In this case, Zenatti not only manipulates but also creates autobiographical memories; she renounces her Arab roots and invents a connection to the Shoah in an attempt to protect herself from rejection by Israeli Jews of European origin.

Zenatti states in an interview with Jewish Tunisian writer Colette Fellous that '[j]'ai voulu devenir quelqu'un de nouveau, y compris dans mon histoire familiale'.[302] This fits with the presupposition Fellous makes that on arrival to Israel, 'il faut effacer la mémoire de […] presque de tout ce qui s'est passé avant, pour redevenir de nouvelles personnes', an experience Aharon Appelfeld also had when he immigrated to the 'old new land'.[303] In the words of Zenatti, '[c]'est exactement

[300] Ernst Kris, 'The Personal Myth: A Problem in Psychoanalytic Technique', *Journal of the American Psychoanalytic Association*, 4 (1956), 653-81 (pp. 654-55).
[301] *Ibid*., p. 653.
[302] Zenatti qtd. in Legrand, 'Carnet nomade avec Valérie Zenatti'.
[303] *Ibid*.

l'un des points qui nous relie, c'est que nous sommes arrivés tous les deux au même âge en Israël, dans des circonstances tout à fait différentes, avec cet impératif qui était de devenir, oui, une nouvelle personne'.[304] The phrases 'quelqu'un de nouveau' and 'une nouvelle personne' recall the attitude of the 1940s and 50s in Israel, where the Shoah and transnational European identity was suppressed and rejected in favour of a nationalistic Israeli identity embodied in the 'New Jew'. As Appelfeld states in an interview, '[t]here was this Zionist fantasy about the "New Jew" [...] the slogan in the '40s and '50s [...] was: "Forget. Become a New Jew"'.[305] In the same vein, Emily Budick writes in her analysis of Appelfeld's autobiography that 'the national dictate commanded the new immigrant not to remember the past [...] the national ideology [...] set out to construct a new Jew and a new Jewish reality'.[306]

A link can be made between the imposed denunciation and internalised renunciation in Israel of European diasporic identity with its connection to the Shoah on the one hand, and of Arab diasporic identity with its connection to the Orient on the other. As Shohat notes, '[i]n order to be transformed

[304] Colette Fellous qtd. in Legrand, 'Carnet nomade avec Valérie Zenatti'.
[305] Appelfeld qtd. in Gold, 'Aharon Appelfeld in Conversation with Nili Gold', pp. 439-40.
[306] Emily Miller Budick, *Aharon Appelfeld's Fiction: Acknowledging the Holocaust* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2005), p. 154.

into "New Jews" (later Israelis), the "Diasporic Jews" had to abandon their diasporic culture, which, in the case of Arab Jews, meant abandoning Arabness and acquiescing in assimilationist modernization, for "their own good"'.[307] Similarly, in *In Spite of Partition: Jews, Arabs, and the Limits of Separatist Imagination*, Hochberg writes: '[a]s for Arab Jews, if they wish to be integrated into the new Jewish national collectivity, they are required to first rid themselves of their Oriental part, that is, their "Arabness"'.[308] Ironically, it is Valérie's lack of connection to the Shoah that excludes her from Israeli society which had previously suppressed memory of this catastrophe, marginalising survivors like Appelfeld in favour of a national identity built on the 'New Jew'. By the time Valérie immigrated to Israel, this had come to be defined as 'a new European, and not an oriental'.[309] As Raz-Krakoztkin notes, '[t]he precondition for being a Jew became "not being an Arab," and a rejection of the culture in whose terms Jewish identity was formerly defined. The renunciation of identity and memory became a precondition for "integration"'.[310] Thus, Valérie renounces the Arab component of her identity and claims

[307] Shohat, 'Rupture and Return', p. 50.
[308] Hochberg, *In Spite of Partition*, p. 10.
[309] See Amnon Raz-Krakotzkin, 'The Zionist Return to the West and the Mizrahi Jewish Perspective', *Orientalism and the Jews*, ed. by Ivan Davidson Kalmar and Derek J. Penslar (Hanover, N.H.: Brandeis University Press, 2005), pp. 162-81.
[310] Raz-Krakotzkin, 'Orientalism, Jewish Studies and Israeli Society', p. 261.

Shoah memory for the sake of integration into a Western-oriented Israeli society defined by this collective trauma.

Yet Valérie's identification with the European Shoah is not merely related to a rejection of North African identity in favour of a Franco-Israeli identity. Indeed, the novella complicates some of the theories laid out above, as it suggests that Valérie has a personal identification with the Shoah which transcends any outside pressure or inward desire for assimilation. In an interview, Zenatti links this to her first encounter with the Shoah through the American television series: 'une gamine ment à sa mère pour voir le film *Holocaust*, car elle devine la réalité de la guerre […] [puis elle] cache de gênantes origines séfarades, parce que je porte en moi cette histoire'.[311] Referring to Anne Frank, Zenatti states in another interview,

> [l]es mensonges nous permettent de dire quelque chose sur nous-mêmes, que l'on n'est pas aux yeux des autres mais que l'on ressent pourtant. Moi, lorsque je m'inventais petite fille juive allemande je crois que ce que je disais par là c'est *« cette histoire me concerne même si je ne l'ai pas vécue, même si c'est pas celle de mes parents, je me sens concernée par elle et je la porte en moi »*.[312]

[311] Zenatti qtd. in E., 'Valérie Zenatti: "'Mensonges"' (para 1 of 5).
[312] Zenatti qtd. in Legrand, 'Carnet nomade avec Valérie Zenatti'.

As Appelfeld himself states, '[a] writer can invent, but if it's not inside you, you cannot invent'.[313] Similarly, Zenatti suggests that her desire to invent lies by claiming a familial connection to the Shoah reveals a deeper truth, a profound association with the past of European Jews. This (hi)story concerns her in that it is one she can relate to, one which affects her, even worries her, from the moment she first heard the word 'Nazi' as a French Jewish child to when she began translating Appelfeld's works as a French Israeli Jewish adult. In Zenatti's own words,

> ces peurs-là […] ont trouvé un écho dans la vie d'Aharon Appelfeld et ont fait que en traduisant son œuvre je m'approche de ces peurs, je les maîtrise peut-être ou je les formule à travers ses mots et à travers les miens.[314]

The verb 's'approcher' suggests both proximity and similarity, while the verb 'maîtriser' can be interpreted both as the narrator mastering the languages of Hebrew and French (as a translator from one to the other), and as her overcoming the fears of her childhood which she is able to put into words

[313] Aharon Appelfeld qtd. in Herbert Mitgang, 'Writing Holocaust Memories', *The New York Times*, 15 November 1986, <https://www.nytimes.com/books/98/02/15/home/appelfeld-holocaust.html> [accessed 9 May 2016] (para 8 of 14).

[314] Zenatti qtd. in Legrand, 'Carnet nomade avec Valérie Zenatti'.

through her translation of Appelfeld's writing, alongside her own *formules*. In this way, *Mensonges* can be seen as a *récit d'affiliation*, and more specifically as an exploration of the author-translator relationship and the narrator's encounter with the Shoah through an auto(bio)fictional account. This brings with it ethical questions of (mis)appropriation, but also demonstrates the creative potential of transgenerational and transcultural engagement.

Transnationalism and Transmission

In *Israel's Holocaust and the Politics of Nationhood*, Zertal writes that the Shoah in general, and Auschwitz in particular, 'has become over the years Israel's main reference in its relations with a world defined repeatedly as anti-Semitic and forever hostile'.[315] In the chapter of *Mensonges* entitled 'Auschwitz, janvier 1994', the narrator recounts her trip to Auschwitz-Birkenau as a twenty-four-year-old journalist for 'une radio juive parisienne' (*M*, p. 42), presumably Radio J. The trip is described as an act of commemoration of the camp's liberation in 1945, and includes European members of parliament, Israeli correspondents, and representatives of the World Jewish Congress, as well as Shoah survivors, most notably prominent French

[315] Zertal, *Israel's Holocaust and the Politics of Nationhood*, p. 4.

magistrate and politician Simone Veil, formerly president of the European Parliament (1979-1982). For the young Valérie, it is not only a journalistic endeavour, but also a journey of (re)discovery and re(a)vulsion.

In his review of Zenatti's *Mensonges*, and with particular reference to the chapter entitled 'Auschwitz, janvier 1994', Czarny writes:

> Dans un chapitre très fort consacré à un reportage qu'elle fait à Auschwitz en tant que journaliste radio, Valérie Zenatti montre tout ce qui la rapproche des survivants et tout ce qui l'éloigne d'une certaine mise en scène de sa visite comme « devoir de mémoire ». Le pathos n'est pas loin, les phrases creuses et lyriques rappellent les slogans patriotiques qui parasitaient l'hébreu pour Appelfeld, en 1948.[316]

In this short commentary, Czarny identifies the postmemorial sense of being unable to participate in the actual lived experience of the survivors. An example of this is when Valérie listens to the survivors' 'histoires du camp' until one of them interjects, '[b]on, on arrête, la petite ne se sent pas bien' (*M*, p. 42). Here Valérie is an outsider, as a journalist if not a child, looking on and listening but unable to enter into this exclusive group of survivors, or to participate in the *partage* of

[316] Czarny, 'D'une langue à l'autre', p. 10.

traumatic memories. The idea of 'mise en scène' is also fitting, as Valérie's postmemory (pieced together from books, photographs, and films) collides with the real thing, which she represents (stages) in the images (props) of the tracks, the gates, the suitcases, and the latrines (*M*, p. 40-42). In this way, the authentic setting becomes a postmemory set, where the real is unreal and the unreal is real.

The chapter begins with the words: 'Nos pas crissent sur la neige. Nous marchons en silence, relevant de temps à autres nos yeux baissés pour contempler l'étendue blanche découpée par les pointillés des barbelés et les aplats grossiers des miradors' (*M*, p. 37). These opening lines of the chapter recollect the survivor testimonies Valérie read during her childhood and teenage years. Most notably, the imagery used recalls '[l]a marche vers les cheminées incrustées dans un ciel indifférent' and the numerous references to snow in Elie Wiesel's *La Nuit*.[317] Yet the 'nous' here is not exclusively composed of Shoah survivors, and the silent procession is well aware of what the barbed wire and watchtowers signify, unlike the victims in Wiesel's autobiographical work, who are still ignorant of their fate as late as 1944.[318] Fifty

[317] Elie Wiesel, 'Préface d'Elie Wiesel à la nouvelle édition', *La Nuit* (Paris: Minuit, 2007 [1958]), p. 20. For references to snow, see Wiesel, *La Nuit*, pp. 150-152, 154, 159-160, 163-167, 172-173, 176, 181, notably p. 165: 'On reprit la marche. Les morts restèrent dans la cour, sous la neige, comme des gardes fidèles assassinés, sans sépulture'.
[318] Wiesel, *La Nuit*, p. 73.

years later, Valérie's imagined reconstruction and the historical reality collide as the landscape of the concentration camp comes into view:

> Des champs, quelques paysans aux casquettes brunes et molles vissées sur la tête, sortis droit de la pellicule de *Shoah*. Des routes, des arbres. [...] Le portail en fer forgé, l'inscription vue sur tant de photos, apprise par cœur il y a longtemps, *Arbeit macht frei*. L'étonnement de la découvrir plus petite que dans mon imaginaire. Même pas effrayante (*M*, pp. 39-40).

In an article entitled 'Surviving Images' (2001), Hirsch writes specifically of the 'Arbeit macht frei' gate to Auschwitz and 'the "Gate of Death" to Birkenau with the multiple tracks leading to it', particularly their significance for the 'postmemorial generation': '[t]he two gates are the thresholds that represent the difficult access to the narratives of dehumanization and extermination'.[319] She quotes Debórah Dwork and Robert Jan van Pelt who write that

> [f]or the post-Auschwitz generation, that gate [to Auschwitz] symbolizes the threshold that separates the *oikomene* (the human community) from the planet Auschwitz. It is a fixed point in our collective memory,

[319] Hirsch, 'Surviving Images', pp. 17-19.

> and therefore the canonical beginning of the tour through the camp.[320]

Thus, the gate to Auschwitz with its infamous motto 'Arbeit macht frei' is immortalised in photographs and branded upon Valérie's postmemorial imagination. Hirsch writes of '[t]he obsessively repeated encounter with this picture' and of how 'its emblematic status has made the gate into a screen memory' for the postmemorial generation.[321] Lucy LaFarge expands upon this Freudian concept in her contribution to *On Freud's "Screen Memories"* (2015):

> the screen memory arises in a state of hyperarousal, taken in at a distance through the eyes. The hyper-real quality of the screen memory reflects this quality of aroused seeing – the excitement and aggression that are evoked by the trauma – and in addition the inability of the immature ego to distinguish the "real" situation that [s]he has seen from his [or her] excited fantasies of it and the defences [s]he erects against it.[322]

The screen memory is terrifying (*effrayante*), a combination of excitement and aggression induced by the vicarious witnessing of the

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[320] Debórah Dwork and Robert Jan van Pelt qtd. in Hirsch, 'Surviving Images', p. 17.
[321] Hirsch, 'Surviving Images', p. 18.
[322] Lucy LaFarge, 'The Screen Memory and the Act of Remembering', in *On Freud's "Screen Memories"*, ed. by Gail S. Reed and Howard B. Levine (London: Karnac, 2015), pp. 36-57 (p. 42).

other's trauma, or rather the trauma of the other within the self, that is the Jewish victim of genocide. In this case, the 'screen' memory of the gate comes before the 'real' memory of the gate, and is more traumatising than the actual encounter, which itself is temporally dislocated from the original traumatic experience endured by the survivors whom Valérie accompanies.

From the work camp of Auschwitz, the group walks to the death camp of Birkenau, where again the photographic representation comes to Valérie's mind on seeing the actual site:

> Les rails découpent la gare en deux bras impassibles. J'ai vu cette photo un nombre incalculable de fois mais je ne pouvais pas imaginer que cette gare existait en dehors de la photo, en dehors du temps de son sinistre service. Pourtant elle est toujours là (*M*, p. 42).

Of 'the "Gate of Death" to Birkenau', Hirsch writes that '[t]hose who read and study about the Holocaust, encounter the image obsessively',[323] which is Valérie's postmemory experience. Hirsch goes on to say that '[l]ike the gate of Auschwitz I, it is the threshold of remembrance, an invitation to enter and, at the same time, a foreclosure'.[324] The gate to Birkenau is a trace of what took

[323] Hirsch, 'Surviving Images', p. 18.
[324] *Ibid*.

place there, which at once discloses a historical reality to Valérie, and simultaneously forecloses this sinister reality which she can only know through postmemorial representation.

Auschwitz as imagined by Valérie – composed of fragments from photographs, books (notably Wiesel's *La Nuit*), and films (notably Lanzmann's *Shoah*) – differs from the real thing. The historic reality, represented in these texts, is at once located and dislocated – in place and from time – so that the memory of the Shoah is both tangible and impenetrable, simultaneously coming alive and remaining dead. As Shoah survivor Simone Veil says in an interview for France 2 on the same visit, '[j]e crois que notamment les jeunes, c'est bien qu'ils viennent ici. Maintenant, est-ce que ces bâtiments tels qu'ils sont aujourd'hui peuvent rendre compte de ce qui s'y passait? Je ne crois pas, pas du tout'.[325] Incidentally, at the very point when Veil is talking about how important it is for young people to visit Auschwitz in this television report, the young Zenatti can be spotted in the background. Veil's words are reiterated in her *avant-propos* to the 2005 edition of *L'Album d'Auschwitz*:

> Je m'adresse, particulièrement, aux jeunes générations. […] Vous serez

[325] Simone Veil, 'Auschwitz/Simone Veil', *France 2 – Journal de 20 heures*, 27 January 1994, <http://www.ina.fr/video/CAB94013919> [accessed 17 May 2016].

> demain les citoyens qui aurez la responsabilité de faire échec à tout ce qui pourrait conduire au même engrenage de haine et de meurtre, à la même faillite de l'humanité. Ce travail de mémoire auquel je vous invite est exigeant et douloureux. Mais il est nécessaire pour que nous puissions bâtir notre avenir, en tant que citoyens d'une Europe réconciliée et plus fraternelle.[326]

With its references to the next generation, 'le travail de mémoire', and building a future for Europe, these words adhere to the third model for overcoming past atrocities identified by Assmann, namely 'remembering in order to forget' (as differentiated from the initial model of 'dialogic forgetting' and the subsequent model of 'remembering in order to never forget').[327] Assmann contextualises and expounds this third model as follows:

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[326] Simone Veil, 'Préface', in *L'Album d'Auschwitz*, ed. by Serge Klarsfeld, Marcello Pezzetti, and Sabine Zeitoun (Marseille: Al Dante, 2005).

[327] See Assmann, 'From Collective Violence to a Common Future', pp. 8-22. Similarly, Esther Benbassa advocates an ethical response to the Shoah by which French Jews see themselves as part of a larger 'travail de mémoire' (as opposed to 'devoir de mémoire') in which 'nos mémoires singulières s'entrelacent dans notre commune histoire d'hommes et de femmes', as opposed to claiming exclusive victimhood. She argues that 'le devoir de mémoire n'aide pas à se projeter dans l'avenir, il est plutôt fermeture sur le passé', and instead calls for political engagement in the present, through combating discrimination in France as it appears in various forms (anti-Semitism, Islamophobia, racism, sexism, homophobia). Esther Benbassa, *La Souffrance comme identité* (Paris: Fayard, 2007), pp. 252, 275, 250.

> Since the 1980s and 1990s, we have witnessed a new memory policy that is no longer in strict opposition to forgetting but in alliance with it. In this model, the aim is also forgetting but the way to achieve this aim paradoxically leads through remembering. In this case, remembering is not implemented to memorialize an event of the past into an indefinite future but is introduced as a therapeutic tool to cleanse, to purge, to heal, and to reconcile. It is not pursued as an end in itself but as a means to an end, which is the forging of a new beginning.[328]

The aim of this model, Assmann writes, is 'to facilitate recognition, reconciliation and, eventually "forgetting" in the sense of putting a traumatic past behind in order to be able to imagine a common future'.[329]

Situated in the post-Cold War period and initiated as a political endeavour, the Auschwitz trip as a whole fits within this model, with its emphasis on 'cosmopolitan memory', human rights, and building a stronger Europe through the European Union.[330] As well as alluding to a postmemory

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[328] Assmann, 'From Collective Violence to a Common Future', p. 13.
[329] *Ibid*., p. 17.
[330] The European Union had been founded in November of the previous year in Maastricht. For more on cosmopolitan memory, see Levy and Sznaider, 'The Institutionalization of Cosmopolitan Morality: The Holocaust and Human Rights', *Journal of Human Rights*, 3 (2004), 143-57, particularly p. 144; and Levy and Sznaider, 'Memories of Europe: Cosmopolitanism and Its Others', in *Cosmopolitanism and Europe*, ed. by

sense of simultaneous identification and detachment, Czarny seems to be suggesting in his short commentary of this chapter that the trip itself is a certain 'mise en scène' framed as a 'devoir de mémoire',[331] considering those who are present, notably Shoah survivors, representatives of the World Jewish Congress (and its European affiliate), MEPs, and Israeli correspondents, as well as French journalists like Valérie. As for 'les phrases creuses et lyriques',[332] it is unlikely that he is referring to the narrator's own wording, as she herself appears to be relatively self-aware; she questions whether her tears are genuine, for example, and describes how in her radio report, 'je bredouille trois phrases en guise de reportage, et me tais' (*M*, p. 44). As Appelfeld himself states, '[s]tuttering indicates the will to say something and the search to overcome obstacles. It gives power to the little that is said. Silence can be more powerful than words in many situations'.[333] Perhaps 'les phrases creuses et lyriques' are not Valérie's own, but those she records and reacts to, which form part of the 'mise en scène' (or framing) of the delegates' trip to Auschwitz. One example is the speeches made at the elaborately decorated town hall in Krakow, first by the mayor and then by 'un homme d'Église [...] qui a longuement parlé des Juifs

Chris Rumford (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press), pp. 158-77.

[331] Czarny, 'D'une langue à l'autre', p. 10.

[332] *Ibid*.

[333] Appelfeld qtd. in Stillman, 'Encounters with Aharon Appelfeld', p. 22.

avant de regretter: « Ils nous manquent beaucoup, ici, en Pologne »' (*M*, pp. 37-38). These speeches are followed by seemingly banal and irreverent 'chat': 'Il y a eu ensuite un buffet, je n'ai rien avalé, des gens parlaient normalement, on pouvait dire qu'ils devisaient, mes oreilles ont commencé à bourdonner' (*M*, p. 38). Another example is the language used by the Polish guide at Auschwitz itself, who speaks 'un français appliqué', using the language of a tour guide: '[s]ur votre gauche'; 'comme vous le savez'; '[n]otez que ces objets sont fragilisés par le temps, leur conservation exige un dispositif perfectionné qui coûte très cher' (*M*, p. 40). Her emotionless reeling off of the victims' possessions, alongside the crude reference to funds provided by UNESCO and the Polish state, is enough to put Valérie off: 'Sa voix se perd devant moi, je renonce à la suivre plus longtemps' (*M*, p. 41).

As reported on France 2's *Journal de 20 Heures*, '[c]e visite n'est pas seulement un pèlerinage mais un geste politique'.[334] Focusing on Veil as a well-known French Shoah survivor and public figure, the reporter situates the visit within the wider transnational sphere:

> Ce n'est pas la première fois que Mme Veil se rend dans un de ces camps de concentration où elle-même a été déportée pendant la guerre, mais

[334] 'Auschwitz/Simone Veil'.

> ce geste a une valeur d'autant plus symbolique aujourd'hui car en Europe centrale des guerres fratricides aboutissent à des horreurs inqualifiables.[335]

It would appear that the reporter is referring to the Yugoslav Wars of the 1990s between Bosniaks, Croats, and Serbs (who were to be equated with the Nazis).[336] It is perhaps no coincidence that a Contact Group (including France, Great Britain, Germany, the United States, and Russia) was set up a month after this timely visit to Auschwitz, with the aim of settling the conflict in Bosnia.[337] Philippe Séguin, the then President of the Assemblée nationale and a prominent Gaullist *souverainiste* who opposed the Treaty of Maastricht in 1992, is named as one of 'de nombreux parlementaires européens' who accompanies Veil on this politicised pilgrimage.[338] Human rights activist Jean Kahn, president of both the Conseil representative des institutions juives de France (1989–95) and the European Jewish Congress (1991–96) at the time, also features in the

[335] *Ibid*.
[336] See Levy and Sznaider, 'Memory Unbound', p. 97, pp. 99-100; and Levy and Sznaider, 'The Institutionalization of Cosmopolitan Morality', p. 153.
[337] For more on the origin, structure, aims, and outcomes of the Contact Group, see Helen Leigh-Phippard, 'The Contact Group on (And in) Bosnia: An Exercise in Conflict Mediation?', *International Journal*, 53 (1998), 306-324; and Qerim Qerimi, 'An Informal World: The Role and Status of "Contact Group" under International Law', *Journal of International and Comparative Law*, 7 (2007), 117-43, particularly pp. 131-40.
[338] 'Auschwitz/Simone Veil'.

short *reportage*. The reporter summarises Kahn's message as a clear and urgent call '[pour] ne pas commettre les mêmes erreurs d'hier'.[339] A snippet from Kahn's speech is included in the report: 'tous les états européens portent la responsabilité d'un passé où l'on se voit là des yeux devant la progression du totalitarisme'.[340] The idea of responsibility fits with the concept of 'travail de mémoire' which, according to Kahn, is the duty of all European states especially in the context of Serbian totalitarianism.[341]

Czarny's most controversial remark in his short commentary is his comparison between 'les phrases creuses et lyriques' of the politicised tour and 'les slogans patriotiques qui parasitaient l'hébreu pour Appelfeld en 1948'.[342] As Appelfeld notes in an interview, these slogans included 'Never again like sheep to the slaughter'[343] and, as he lays out in his autobiography, their aim was to build a strong Jewish nation built on the principle of 'construire et être construits'.[344] For various historical and ideological reasons, some Zionist rhetoric has since developed into a self-defensive, anti-terrorist (as opposed to

[339] *Ibid*.
[340] Jean Kahn, 'Auschwitz/Simone Veil'.
[341] For more on this, see Vlasta Jalusic, 'Post-totalitarian Elements and Eichmann's Mentality in the Yugoslav War and Mass Killings', *Journal for Political Thinking*, 4 (2008), <http://www.hannaharendt.net/index.php/han/article/view/125/216> [accessed 26 May 2016].
[342] Czarny, 'D'une langue à l'autre', p. 10.
[343] Appelfeld qtd. in Roth, 'Walking the Way of the Survivor'.
[344] Appelfeld, *Histoire d'une vie*, p. 141.

anti-totalitarian) language which arguably acts out of a fear of a 'second holocaust'.[345] As we have seen, the binaries of good/evil and victim/perpetrator were delineated in relation to the Shoah in legal terms on a national scale in the Nuremberg and Eichmann trials, and on a transnational scale by the EU and the UN. The view that 'Israel can do no wrong' and the concept of 'hereditary victimhood' fit within these binaries.[346] These fixed beliefs can be linked to the notion of 'inherited fear' and the perceived necessity to protect or defend the Jewish state from any present or future threat by all means and at all costs.[347]

Zenatti's novel *En retard pour la guerre* explores the legacy of the Shoah in Israel through connecting postmemory trauma with existential fear of a 'second holocaust' on a national – as opposed to an ethnic or a religious – scale, offering a critique of victim mentality as (post)traumatic response. *En*

[345] On the 'second holocaust', see Alvin H. Rosenfeld, 'Epilogue: A Second Holocaust?', in *The End of the Holocaust* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2011), pp. 271-80; Jo Roberts, *Contested Land, Contested Memory: Israel's Jews and Arabs and the Ghosts of Catastrophe* (Toronto: Dundurn Press, 2013), pp. 149-243; and Michael Rothberg, 'The Spectre of the "Second Holocaust"', *openDemocracy*, 31 October 2008, <https://www.opendemocracy.net/usa/blog/michael_rothberg/second_holocaust_discourse_obama> [accessed 1 February 2016].

[346] On 'hereditary victimhood', see Zygmunt Bauman, 'Hereditary Victimhood: The Holocaust's Life as a Ghost', *Tikkun*, 13 (1998), 33-38; and Jie-Hyun Lim, 'Victimhood Nationalism in Contested Memories: National Mourning and Global Accountability', in *Memory in a Global Age*, pp. 138-62.

[347] On 'inherited fear', see Hanna Yaoz, 'Inherited Fear: Second-Generation Poets and Novelists in Israel', in *Breaking Crystal: Writing and Memory After Auschwitz*, ed. by Efraim Sicher (Illinois: University of Illinois Press 1998), pp. 160-69.

retard pour la guerre, which was adapted into a film with the even more dramatic title *Ultimatum* (dir. by Alain Tasma, 2008), is set in the Gulf War, which is portrayed as an existential threat to Israel, triggering what Roberts terms 'existential anxiety' in its population.[348] Similarly, in *L'Homme dominé*, Memmi speaks of 'la menace, qui ne cesse de rôder' through which 'l'anxiété juive est [...] entretenue',[349] evidenced in Zenatti's *Mensonges* in the paranoia the narrator experiences after her televised encounter with the Shoah. In *En retard pour la guerre*, Zenatti evokes the Shoah and the potential for a 'second holocaust' (in her use of parallel imagery of gas masks and chambers) and in so doing demonstrates that the fear, whether based in reality or not, was real for many Israelis during the Gulf War, traumatised as they were by personal or assimilated memory of the Shoah. As Roberts writes, '[t]o be traumatized means to live in the fear that the traumatic event will be repeated. [...] Fear of the past's repeating itself shapes how the events of the present are experienced, and how we respond to them'.[350] Zenatti's micronarrative of postmemorial trauma and existential fear in *En retard pour la guerre* is written within Israel's metanarrative of security, the Jewish democratic state being

[348] Roberts, *Contested Land, Contested Memory*, p. 154.
[349] Memmi, *L'Homme dominé*, p. 107.
[350] Roberts, *Contested Land, Contested Memory*, p. 151.

first and foremost a safe haven for persecuted Jews. Yet, in her teenage epistolary novel *Une bouteille dans la mer de Gaza*, Zenatti challenges an insular, victim-focused conception of Israeli identity built solely on Shoah trauma and fear of the perceived enemy figure of the Palestinian, instead adopting a dialogic approach.

Towards Dialogic Memory

In this chapter, we have looked at Hirsch's concept of postmemory and Assmann's four models for 'dealing with a traumatic past'.[351] Applied to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict as portrayed in the primary texts studied here, we might extend this to 'dealing with traumatic pasts' in the plural – traumatic pasts which are different but interrelated – encompassing the Shoah, colonialism, and the Nakba. The fourth and final model proposed by Assmann is a speculative and daringly hopeful one, namely 'dialogic remembering'.[352] Assmann writes, '[d]ialogic memory transcends the old policy by integrating two or more perspectives on a common legacy of traumatic violence'.[353] Although she argues that '[d]ialogic memory has a special relevance for Europe', she nevertheless acknowledges that '[it] can be

[351] Assmann, 'From Collective Violence to a Common Future', pp. 8-22.
[352] See Assmann, 'From Collective Violence to a Common Future', pp. 17-21; and Assmann, 'Dialogic Memory', pp. 210-11.
[353] Assmann, 'Dialogic Memory', p. 208.

extended also to other regions of the world', and goes on to take the Israeli-Palestinian conflict as a case study.[354]

As we have seen, Said advocates coexistence and dialogue between Jews and Palestinians, who share a traumatic and entangled common history: 'What is desired', he writes, 'is a notion of coexistence that is true to the differences between Jew and Palestinian, but true also to the common history of different struggle and unequal survival that links them. There can be no higher ethical and moral imperative than discussions and dialogues about that'.[355] In the absence of such dialogue, the authors studied here turned to literature on a personal and relational level (in terms of relating both to the conflict and to those implicated in it). Zenatti confesses in an interview that 'je suis allée vers la fiction parce que cette espace de dialogue n'existait plus'.[356] A desire for reconciliation is particularly prominent in the teenage epistolary novel *Une bouteille dans la mer de Gaza*, which documents email correspondence between two teenagers of the Oslo generation, namely Tal, an Israeli of French origin born in Tel Aviv, and Naïm, a Palestinian living in Gaza City. In this novel,

[354] *Ibid*., p. 210.
[355] Edward Said, 'Bases for Coexistence', in *The End of the Peace Process: Oslo and After* (New York: Vintage, 2001), pp. 205-9 (p. 208).
[356] Valérie Zénatti, 'Valérie Zénatti et Thierry Benisti, France Inter, 12 February 2012, <https://www.franceinter.fr/emissions/l-humeur-vagabonde/l-humeur-vagabonde-01-fevrier-2012> [accessed 28 April 2018].

the so-called enemy is humanised and virtually befriended, as the two protagonists come to care about one another's safety in the context of the Second Intifada with its vicious cycle of violence and counter-violence. The novel is intended for a teenage audience and is therefore quite didactic, judged suitable for classroom use, nevertheless this simplicity allows for a more direct, explicit, and emotional approach than other texts studied here. For example, Naïm writes to Tal,

> Vous avez eu votre indépendance en 1948. Personne dans la région ne l'a accepté. On vous a fait la guerre. Ma famille a eu peur des combats et a quitté Jaffa. Les armées arabes promettaient de vous chasser très vite, promettaient que le retour serait rapide […] le retour n'a jamais eu lieu. Vous avez gagné la guerre et nous sommes restés coincés à Gaza, sous le contrôle des Égyptiens. Depuis, ce qui est un jour de joie pour vous, la fête de l'Indépendance, est un jour de deuil pour nous, la Naqba, la catastrophe.[357]

This reflects Roberts' words in *Contested Land, Contested Memory*: '[t]wo devastating events, the Shoah and the Nakba, marked Israel's founding, and how each has been remembered and forgotten has infused both the political and the physical landscape of the

[357] Zenatti, *Une bouteille dans la mer de Gaza*, p. 91.

country'.[358] Naïm goes on to include the Naksa: 'En 1967 il y a eu une autre guerre, la guerre des Six Jours. Vous avez encore gagné. Vous avez conquis les territoires où nous vivons et, depuis, nous rêvons chaque jour plus intensément à notre indépendance. Et certains à votre destruction, c'est vrai. Mais pas tous'.[359]

Set in another traumatic moment, the Second Intifada, it is painfully clear that the lives of the two teenage protagonists are remarkably different, as can be seen in Naïm's ironic words, 'Moi aussi je peux être très occupé'.[360] This is of course a reference to the occupation, as he is writing before Israel withdrew from the Gaza Strip. Moreover, Naïm is aware of Tal's approaching military service. In another teenage coming-of-age novel entitled *Quand j'étais soldate*, this time in an autobiographical diary format, Zenatti depicts the life of a female soldier in the IDF. This novel can be seen as a kind of sequel to *Une bouteille dans la mer de Gaza*, although it was written beforehand, and is marketed in the Anglophone world as a memoir.[361] *Une bouteille dans la mer de Gaza* was adapted into a film in 2011, fulfilling Tal's almost prophetic phrase in the book: 'les histoires, dans la vie […] [finissent] souvent mal, surtout dans notre région, et […] [il faut] que

[358] Roberts, *Contested Land, Contested Memory*, p. 21.
[359] Zenatti, *Une bouteille dans la mer de Gaza*, p. 91.
[360] *Ibid*., p. 52.
[361] Valérie Zenatti, *When I was a Soldier: A Memoir*, trans. by Adriana Hunter (New York: Bloomsbury, 2005).

le cinéma nous donne la possibilité d'espérer un peu'.[362] In *Une bouteille dans la mer de Gaza*, there is an emphasis on dialogue alongside a recognition of differences, inequality, and disproportion. Despite the risk taken by Naïm and to a lesser extent Tal, Tal's father comes to envisage the possibility of a positive outcome to this endeavour for his Israeli daughter and her Palestinian electronic pen-pal to be in contact with one another: 'Mon père a dit encore que cette correspondance était un signe d'espoir. Qu'elle prouvait qu'il y avait quelque chose de possible entre vous et nous, un rapport humain et amical'.[363]

In conclusion, this chapter has revealed, through analysis of Zenatti's *Mensonges*, a new lens through which to read texts which combine autobiographical, biographical and fictional elements, namely the *récit d'affiliation*, an extension of the *récit de filiation*. This in turns raises ethical questions surrounding appropriation, empathy, and solidarity when it comes to 'affiliative memory'.[364] Moreover, the chapter has highlighted the potential of 'dialogic memory'[365] as manifested in the epistolary teenage novel *Une bouteille dans la mer de Gaza*. As Assmann herself acknowledges, '[o]n the whole [...] dialogic memory is still more of a project than a reality and is best

[362] Zenatti, *Une bouteille dans la mer de Gaza*, p. 95.
[363] *Ibid*., p. 145.
[364] Hirsch, 'The Generation of Postmemory', p. 114.
[365] See Assmann, 'Dialogic Memory', pp. 199-214.

exemplified by its absence'.[366] In a televised debate which aired on France 2 in October 2015 entitled 'Une nouvelle intifada s'est-elle déclarée en Israël?', Zenatti said that, 'le temps qui passe sans rien faire, c'est une catastrophe'.[367] The use of the word 'catastrophe' has all the more impact and meaning in the light (or shadow) of a catastrophic past for both Jews and Palestinians, through their entangled though unequatable traumatic histories of the Shoah and the Nakba, respectively. In the current context of diplomatic impasse and bursts of violence, France has been proposing a peace initiative reminiscent of the Paris Peace Conference of 1919, but nothing has yet materialised, begging the question posed by Zenatti in the televised debate: 'Comment redéfinir la problématique aujourd'hui?'[368] Perhaps works of fiction, and specifically Franco-Maghrebi fictional texts, have a role to play in this redefinition, through unsettling fixed memories and identity positions, in order to envision and work towards what Hochberg terms 'an Arab-Jewish future located beyond the limits of separatist

[366] Assmann, 'From Collective Violence to a Common Future', p. 19.
[367] Valérie Zenatti, 'Une nouvelle intifada s'est-elle déclarée en Israël?', *Ce soir (ou jamais!)*, France 2, 16 October 2015.
[368] *Ibid*. See 'Initiative for the Middle East Peace Process', *France Diplomatie*, 2018, <https://www.diplomatie.gouv.fr/en/country-files/israel-palestinian-territories/peace-process/initiative-for-the-middle-east-peace-process/> [accessed 28 April 2018].

imagination'.[369] This is a vision shared by Slimane Benaïssa and André Chouraqui in their co-written play, *L'Avenir oublié*, which forms the focus of the next chapter, specifically in relation to the unsettling memories of the Shoah and the Nakba alongside the troubled identities of Arab-Jew and Arab Israeli.

[369] Hochberg, *In Spite of Partition*, p. 19, original emphasis. Similarly, Shohat writes of the potential of 'the Arab-Jew' concept to 'evoke the memory of a shared past while also pointing to a possible future of re/conciliation'. Ella Shohat, *On the Arab-Jew, Palestine, and Other Displacements: Selected Writings* (London: Pluto Press, 2017), p. 10.

CHAPTER II

Contradiction in Terms? The *Pied-Noir* Jew and the Arab Israeli

In this chapter, I shall examine the misnomer *pied-noir* Jew alongside the supposedly contradictory identities of Arab Jew and Arab Israeli (Christian/Muslim) in the context of transcultural (as opposed to transnational) memory studies, and in relation to Slimane Benaïssa's play *L'Avenir oublié* (1999).[370] I shall also explore predominant Israeli narratives alongside predominant Palestinian narratives, as touched upon in the previous chapter and as examined in Jo Roberts' *Contested Land, Contested Memory: Israel's Jews and Arabs and the Ghosts of Catastrophe* (2013). These identities and narratives are staged and (re)presented in Benaïssa's play *L'Avenir oublié*, written avec 'la complicité de' Chouraqui, a Sephardi Israeli of (French) Algerian descent who passed away in 2007. According to Benaïssa, '[Chouraqui] n'a pas écrit un seul mot dans cette pièce. La complicité, c'est qu'il m'a aidé à aller en Israël'.[371] Significantly, both Franco-Maghrebi authors experienced exile from Algeria: Chouraqui as a Jew who found refuge in Israel where he engaged in interfaith dialogue, and Benaïssa as a dissident Berber

[370] Slimane Benaïssa, *L'Avenir oublié* (Brussels: Lansman, 1999). All references to the primary text shall appear in brackets as follows: *AO*, page number.
[371] Benaïssa qtd. in Vince, '"Je commence là où ça se tait"', p. 8.

writer who immigrated to France during the Black Decade or Algerian Civil War (1991–2002). I shall thus discern the suitability of such terms as *pied-noir* Jew, Arab Jew, *pied-noir* Muslim and Muslim Algerian in describing these two writers, who argue for *rapprochement* as opposed to *ressentiment* between Arabs and Jews in this co-written play set in late 1990s Jerusalem. The focus of this chapter, then, will be on *L'Avenir oublié*, in relation to the filtiations and affiliations of Benaïssa and Chouraqui, alongside their intersecting trajectories, divergences, and convergences.

Benaïssa's later play *Les Papiers de l'amour* (2007) explores similar themes to *L'Avenir oublié* but this time in a European context, through a romantic encounter between a Jewish lawyer from Switzerland and a Palestinian engineer working in Amsterdam, who is, symbolically, building bridges. Each of these plays can be seen as staging an unlikelihood (if not an impossibility), a counterfactual *mise-en-scène*, as they conceive of an alternative future to one of antagonism and conflict. As Keir Elam writes in *The Semiotics of Theatre and Drama*, '[d]ramatic worlds are hypothetical ("as if") constructs, that is, they are recognized by the audience as counterfactual (i.e. non-real) states of affairs but are embodied as if in progress in the actual here

and now'.[372] This 'as if' can be read as incredulous when it comes to reality, but in the 'world of the play', as a possibility to be actualised.[373] In the words of Michael Bennett, '[p]rocessing and interacting with reality is a necessary tool to live in the world as it *is*. Make-believe is a necessary tool to imagine the world as it *might*, *could*, or *could not* be', as in the forgotten future of Benaïssa's play.[374] In relation to the counterfactual, Bennett writes that '[i]n this sense, theatre is a fictional past event unfolding in the present towards a future where all possibilities are still open', even as *L'Avenir oublié* remains open-ended.[375]

It is significant that *L'Avenir oublié*, set in Jerusalem and staging dialogue between Israelis and Palestinians, was written following the Oslo Accords, in which Yasser Arafat recognised the right of the State of Israel to exist and Yitzak Rabin recognised the Palestine Liberation Organization as the representative of the Palestinian people.[376] *Les Papiers de l'amour*, on the other hand, was written following the Second Intifada and the creation of the separation barrier/fence/wall, when political impasse coupled with ongoing settlement-building and outbursts of violence

[372] Keir Elam, *The Semiotics of Theatre and Drama* (London: Routledge, 2002), p. 91. See also p. 102.
[373] See Michael Y. Bennett, *Analytic Philosophy and the World of the Play* (Milton Park, Abingdon, Oxon; New York: Routledge, 2017), p. 85.
[374] *Ibid*, p. 133.
[375] *Ibid*, p. 85.
[376] See Shipler, *Arab and Jew* (2015), p. xvi.

replaced the crumbling peace process. This made on-the-ground dialogue more difficult and perhaps explains Benaïssa's decision to displace and transport such dialogue to Europe, this time between a Jew and a Palestinian, rather than between two Israelis – one Jewish, one Arab – as in *L'Avenir oublié*.

Benaïssa is a Chaoui Tamazight (Berber) Algerian playwright and novelist who fled his native country for France in 1993 during the *décennie noire* in Algeria.[377] This is an experience he relates in the first play he wrote after moving to France, *Les Fils de l'amertume* (1996), which was adapted into a novel by the same name in 1999.[378] A later novel, entitled *Le Silence de la falaise* (2001) is a fictional critique of theatre censorship in Algeria, which Benaïssa himself experienced in the past.[379] Janice Gross describes how '[a]fter numerous assassinations of prominent writers, [...] France became the escape hatch for many creative artists deprived of freedom, and endangered by death threats', including Benaïssa.[380] Interestingly, Harrison comments in a footnote that Benaïssa 'position[s] the Palestinian question in relation to [...] the

[377] Chaoui is one of six Tamazight dialects in Algeria and originates from the Aures region.
[378] Slimane Benaïssa, *Les Fils de l'amertume* (Brussels: Lansman, 1996); and Slimane Benaïssa, *Les Fils de l'amertume: Roman* (Paris: Plon, 1999).
[379] Slimane Benaïssa, *Le Silence de la falaise* (Paris: Plon, 2001).
[380] Janice Gross, 'Performing at the Crossroads of Algeria and France: Slimane Benaïssa and Mohamed Kacimi', *The French Review*, 83 (2010), 1258-71 (p. 1259).

Algerian "black decade"'.[381] Indeed, Benaïssa notes that his experience of religious fundamentalism and the *décennie noire* was one of his reasons for writing *L'Avenir oublié*: 'j'ai quitté l'Algérie après des menaces intégristes [...] je ne pouvais comprendre jusqu'au bout ce problème sans comprendre réellement ce qui se passait en Israël et en Palestine, puisque cette problématique constitue le fond de commerce de tous les islamistes intégristes'.[382] Thus, without equating the two, he draws a parallel between civil war in Algeria and the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

Moreover, Benaïssa draws a link between Israel, colonisation, and the Shoah: 'Je ne peux pas, en tant qu'arabe […] ne voir dans la création de l'État d'Israël que l'aspect Juif [*sic*] colonisateur alors qu'ils [les Juifs] sortaient de l'Europe plus affaiblis que jamais, plus rejetés que jamais'.[383] After detailing the suffering of Algerians under colonisation and their fight for independence, he states, 'quand on a vécu tout cela, pourquoi ne sommes-nous pas capables de comprendre et d'admettre qu'un peuple dont on a brûlé 6 millions de personnes ne puisse pas avoir droit à sa propre terre?'[384] Here, he advocates self-determination of the Jewish people,

[381] Harrison, *Transcolonial Maghreb*, p. 156, n. 25.
[382] Slimane Benaïssa, 'Juif et arabe, deux ou trois choses dont nous avons discuté, André et Moi', Centenaire de la naissance d'André Chouraqui, Yitzhak Ben-Zvi Institute, 26 October 2017.
[383] *Ibid*.
[384] *Ibid*.

suggesting that Zionism might be perceived as an independence movement while also recognising that there is a colonial aspect to the State of Israel. As Debrauwere-Miller notes, 'Benaïssa adopts a subversive viewpoint in his attempt to bridge the gap between Jews and Arabs', and it is this viewpoint and attempt at reconciliation which will be analysed in what follows.[385]

In recalling his trip to Israel, Benaïssa notes, '[j']ai découvert les Arabes israéliens, j'ignorais totalement leur existence, personne n'en parle et je sens qu'ils sont un point nodal dans toute cette problématique'.[386] 'Arab Israeli' or 'Israeli-Arab' is an ethno-nationalist identity ascribed by the state of Israel, which is either adopted as auto-definition or rejected in favour of the self-ascribed identity 'Palestinian with Israeli passport'. In *Arab and Jew: Wounded Spirits in a Promised Land,* Shipler writes that

> [t]hose who reside inside Israel proper – that is, within the pre-1967 boundaries of the Jewish state – are citizens of Israel with the rights to vote in local and national elections, to equal protection under the law, to the judicial system's due process, and the like. The vast majority of these are sedentary and are commonly known as "Israeli Arabs."[387]

[385] Debrauwere-Miller, 'Introduction', p. 16.
[386] Benaïssa, 'Juif et arabe, deux ou trois choses dont nous avons discuté, André et Moi'.
[387] Shipler, *Arab and Jew* (2015), p. 17.

Yet he acknowledges that '[m]any have come to prefer other labels: Palestinians, Palestinians living in Israel, Arab citizens of Israel, Arabs living in Israel, etc.'.[388] 'Arab-Jew', meanwhile, is a mostly retrospective, self-ascribed identity and oft political statement, chosen by a minority of Israeli intellectuals as an additional or alternative term to Sephardim and/or Mizrahim (Orientals), as differentiated from Ashkenazim (Europeans/Westerners).[389] As seen in the previous chapter, although a majority in Israel, these Jews from Arab countries often find themselves on the periphery of Israeli society, along with the Arab Israeli minority, and both feel marginalised (albeit to varying degrees) by the perceivably dominant culture of the Ashkenazim.[390] Said stated in 1992 (and arguably little has changed since then) that '[w]ords like "democratic" and "Western" flutter around Israel even as the 750,000 Palestinians who are Israeli citizens constitute a little under 20 percent of the population and are treated as a fourth-rate minority called "non-Jews," legally prevented from buying, leasing, or renting land "held in trust for the

[388] *Ibid*.

[389] Notably Ella Shohat, Sami Shalom Chetrit, and Yehouda Shenhav. See Moshe Behar, 'Mizrahim, Abstracted: Action, Reflection, and the Academization of the Mizrahi Cause', *Journal of Palestine Studies*, 37 (2008), 89-100. We will return to the concept of the Arab-Jew in the following chapter, specifically in relation to Memmi's seeming rejection of the term 'Juif-Arabe'.

[390] See Shohat, *Israeli Cinema: East/West and the Politics of Representation*, p. 4.

Jewish people"'.[391] Meanwhile, Jews from Arab countries in many cases have felt they have to deny their Arab culture in order to assimilate into Israeli society, where they nevertheless encounter racism and bureaucratic difficulty. The two conflicted identities of Arab Jew and Arab Israeli, which challenge the Eurocentric model from within, are explored and problematised in Benaïssa's *L'Avenir oublié*, in the context of the Israeli-Palestinian (or Arab-Israeli) conflict. The reader encounters various multi-faceted figures in this text: the Palestinian with Israeli passport, the Christo-Muslim Zionist Israeli Arab and the anti-Zionist Israeli Jew of mixed French/Algerian heritage. Beyond the hybridity already contained in the separate categories of Arab Jew and Arab Israeli, this text suggests the possibility of an intercultural relationship in which these already dual identities interact, through empathy and interfaith engagement, in a seemingly impossible situation of political impasse and religious division.

Staging Transcultural Memory

Transnational movements which relate to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict include the Arab League, the World Jewish Congress, and the Palestine Solidarity Campaign (encompassing

[391] Said, 'Nationalism, Human Rights, and Interpretation', pp. 433-34.

the Boycotts, Divestment, and Sanctions movement), all with their own memory discourses. Rather than promoting empathetic dialogue and relational exchange, these attempts at global solidarity are often partisan and therefore polarising, at times exacerbating rather than pacifying dispute and conflict. Transculturality is perhaps a more favourable concept in this context, with its potential for hybridity and even plurality, embodied in the ambiguous and often mediating positions of Arab Jew and Arab Israeli, as depicted in Benaïssa's *L'Avenir oublié*, which explores the 'layering' of the traumatic legacies of the Shoah and the Nakba in acts one and two, culminating in transcultural encounter in act three.[392] In *L'Avenir oublié*, Benaïssa and Chouraqui seek to create a space of exchange with one another and with the audience, through the characters' hybrid, even plural, identities and interaction with the alleged 'other' (including the other's memories and narrative), within and outside of the self. In his tribute to Chouraqui, entitled 'Juif et arabe, deux ou trois choses dont nous avons discuté, André et moi', Benaïssa states, '[l']autre avant d'être une différence, est avant tout et en grande partie, une ressemblance. Car on ne peut comparer, en positif ou en

[392] See Rothberg, 'Multidirectional Memory in Migratory Settings', p. 130.

négative, que des choses qui se ressemblent'.[393]

Adopting a dialectical approach, the three acts of *L'Avenir oublié* form the thesis, antithesis, and synthesis. The thesis tracks a predominant Israeli narrative, in which the Shoah is a key component and to which the concept of 'aliyah' (Jewish return to the 'Promised Land') is central. The antithesis recounts a predominant Palestinian narrative, overshadowed by the Nakba (catastrophic expulsion of Palestinians from their homes) and characterised by 'Al-Awda' (intense longing to return).[394] Finally, the synthesis encompasses interfaith dialogue and depicts a somewhat disillusioned but nevertheless hopeful 'Oslo generation' demonstrating the potential of Arab-Jewish friendship, solidarity, and co-operation. The hopeful ending to the play is reflective of the time in which it was set and written, following the Oslo Accords, which were premised on mutual recognition.[395]

The play challenges the stereotype of the Arab Israeli who self-defines as Palestinian and is against the IDF, and of the Jewish Israeli who is uncritical of the army's actions and more than willing to fight for his country. Indeed, these roles are reversed, in a

[393] Benaïssa, 'Juif et arabe, deux ou trois choses dont nous avons discuté, André et Moi'.
[394] 'Al-Awda', meaning 'to return' is the name of The Palestine Right to Return Coalition.
[395] See Uri Ben-Eliezer, *Old Conflict, New War Israel's Politics toward the Palestinians* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012), pp. 35-38, especially p. 36.

provocative if not unbelievable way. The first act begins with a conversation between the Jewish mother Josette, an Ashkenazi/Sephardi hybrid – as a Shoah survivor who lost her husband in the Six-Day War but who also remembers Jewish-Arab coexistence in North Africa – and her son Joseph, who is in shock following a bomb explosion and threatens to leave the army for ethical reasons, particularly in relation to the occupation. Herself shaken by the near-death experience of her son and his desperate resorting to alcohol, Josette summons her two brothers to speak to him: one an assimilated Jew residing in Paris, and the other an orthodox Jew living in the Golan Heights, which Israel annexed in the Six-Day War and is considered occupied under international law.

The second act of *L'Avenir oublié* in many ways mirrors the first; indeed the preliminary notes indicate that the mother and uncles (this time Arab Muslim) can be played by the same actors who played their Jewish counterparts in the first act, thus highlighting the proximity and suggesting the intersubjectivity (perhaps even interchangeability) of Jewish and Arab identities.[396] The Arab Muslim mother, Fatima, disputes with her son Antoine-Nasser regarding the IDF because he claims he has

[396] Regarding the casting and staging of the play in line with these notes, see Rachel Nisselson, 'Remembering the Future: Francophone Perspectives on the Israel-Palestine Conflict' (unpublished doctoral thesis, University of Vanderbilt, 2010), p.12.

been accepted into the army, pretending to be a Bedouin (*AO*, p. 30). As Shipler notes, '[t]he [Israeli] army usually accepts the Bedouins, who serve as trackers, and rejects Palestinian Arabs, whether Christian or otherwise, as potentially subversive'.[397] Antoine-Nasser wanting to join the army is just as controversial as Joseph wanting to leave it. Fatima's two Muslim brothers make an appearance in an attempt to 'talk sense' to Antoine-Nasser: one living in Israel whose house is being demolished, and another who refuses Israeli nationality. The third and final act sees a philosophical, quasi-theological exchange between the younger-generation friends, Joseph and Antoine-Nasser, as they symbolically dig a well together. Joseph decides to return to the IDF, though remains critical of its military tactics (*AO*, p. 43), and Antoine-Nasser confesses that he was in fact not accepted into the army, but was testing the ground as he hopes to marry a Jewish Israeli (*AO*, p. 45). Both Joseph and Antoine-Nasser seek to make sense of the world around them by provoking conversation in order to get a reaction from their respective family members, as they deal with the traumatic experiences of the past and present. As Said writes, '[w]e must think our histories together, however difficult that may be, in order for there to be a common future', based upon

[397] Shipler, *Arab and Jew* (2015), p. 203. Later, Shipler writes, 'the army does not take Arabs, except for Bedouins and Druse'. *Ibid*., p. 355.

'real coexistence between the peoples whose share of historical sufferings links them inextricably'.[398] Indeed, according to Rothberg, Said 'had a distinctly transcultural approach to the intersecting memories of all the players in the Middle East conflict'.[399]

In her article 'Transcultural Memory in Conflict: Israeli-Palestinian Truth and Reconciliation' (2011), Yifat Gutman writes of '[t]he memory activists of the 2000s and other new activist groups' who 'concentrate on building trust not through consensus building, but rather, through narratives that acknowledge conflicting histories and ideas while also promoting self-criticism of national narratives and of fixed identities'.[400] In a sense, Benaïssa was a dislocated transnational, literary 'memory activist' before his time, writing about the Israeli-Palestinian conflict's 'conflicting histories' of loss, catastrophe, and exile, from an Algerian perspective. Moreover, he promotes 'self-criticism of national narrative' (through narrative) such as the permanent state of emergency due to the perceived threat of a 'second holocaust', as well as the 'self-criticism [...] of fixed identities', notably those of Jew and Arab as separate entities, opposed as enemies in the

[398] Edward Said qtd. in Gil Z. Hochberg, 'Edward Said: "The Last Jewish Intellectual": On Identity, Alterity, and the Politics of Memory', *Social Text*, 24 (2006), 47-65 (p. 52).
[399] Moses and Rothberg, 'A Dialogue on the Ethics and Politics of Transcultural Memory', p. 36.
[400] Yifat Gutman, 'Transcultural Memory in Conflict: Israeli-Palestinian Truth and Reconciliation', *Parallax*, 17 (2011), 61-74 (p. 63).

so-called Arab-Israeli conflict. This coincides with Assmann's theory of 'dialogic memory', as introduced in the previous chapter, which she writes 'transcends the old policy [whereby national memories were mainly constructed around heroic actions and heroic suffering] by integrating two or more perspectives on a common legacy of traumatic violence'.[401] In this framework, the two parties 'engage in a dialogic memory if they face a shared history of mutual violence by mutually acknowledging their own guilt and empathy with the suffering they have inflicted on others'.[402]

Benaïssa and Chouraqui: Pied-noir*, Arab or Muslim-Jew?*

In the context of exile, Benaïssa turned to the written word and notably theatre; as he writes through the autobiographical 'auteur' character in his play *Prophètes sans Dieu* (1998), 'l'exil me pèse sur les reins et la scène est le seul pays qui me reste parce qu'elle m'a aidé à renaître en dehors de mon pays'.[403] In *Prophètes sans dieu*, Benaïssa provides a platform for an imaginary dialogue between an actor playing Moses, an actor playing Jesus, and the author who refuses to represent the prophet Mohammed. In this way, Benaïssa

[401] Assmann, 'Dialogic Memory', pp. 206, 208.
[402] *Ibid*., p. 208.
[403] Slimane Benaïssa, *Prophètes sans dieu* (Brussels: Lansman, 1998).

attempts to straddle the sacrilegious and the sublime through a philosophical, quasi-theological debate interrogating the potential of the Abrahamic connection to both unify and divide, which he pursues dialogically in the play *L'Avenir oublié*, specifically in relation to the 'Holy Land', alongside Chouraqui who found refuge there. As Cyril Aslanov notes,

> [t]he fact that during the play [*Prophètes sans dieu*] the quotations from the Bible, the New Testament and even from the Qur'an are given according to André Chouraqui's translation of those sacred books hints at Benaïssa's debt to the legacy of this Algerian-born Francophone Israeli who tried to transcend the rivalry between the three monotheisms when he translated their respective foundational texts into French.[404]

Aslanov concludes that '[t]he secular horizon of Francophony [*sic*] is, therefore, the common instance where otherwise irreconcilable particularisms may be brought together',[405] and yet there is something decidedly interfaith about these two plays by Benaïssa.

Moreover, the common ground Benaïssa shares with Chouraqui is Algeria as well as Francophone universalism. Indeed,

[404] Cyril Aslanov, 'Slimane Benaïssa, or the Voice of Dissidence', in *Israeli-Palestinian Conflict in the Francophone World*, pp. 67-80 (p. 73).
[405] *Ibid*., p. 73.

Aslanov seems to suggest this himself when he writes that

> [Benaïssa] does not indulge in a depiction of the specific Algerian horizon that is common to him and to his spiritual mentor, André Chouraqui. However, it is precisely the existence of such a common background that may have trigged the dialogue between them (perhaps more than their common belonging to the category of French-speaking intellectuals.[406]

Furthermore, in my interview with him, Benaïssa highlighted their shared Algerian identity, to which Chouraqui drew his attention when they first met: 'Il voulait que je lui parle de moi: "D'où es-tu en Algérie?" […] Et nous nous sommes reconnus grâce à cet espace algérien, alors que lui, il vivait en Israël'.[407] This recognition through shared space is troubled by the fact that it is difficult for Israelis to enter Algeria and for Algerians to enter Israel. According to Benaïssa, Chouraqui went on to ask him if he was a Mozabite and Benaïssa responded, 'Oui, mon père est de Ben-Izguen [dans le M'zab] et je suis musulman ibadite'.[408] Benaïssa's self-definition as an Ibadi Muslim is significant here. This minority sect was integrated into

[406] *Ibid*., p. 76.
[407] Benaïssa qtd. in Vince, '"Je commence là où ça se tait"', p. 8.
[408] Benaïssa, 'Juif et arabe, deux ou trois choses dont nous avons discuté, André et Moi'.

Sunni Islam, notably through a unifying Salafism and Arab Muslim nationalism in Algeria.[409] Responding to Chouraqui who, in speaking of Mozabites as an Algerian Jew, affirms '[c']est des cousins', Benaïssa replies, '[c']est vrai, on nous désigne souvent comme les juifs de Mohamed'.[410] Thus Benaïssa and Chouraqui demonstrate how the common ground of minority identity and religious affiliation can form a basis for dialogue.

In his chapter in Debrauwere-Miller's *Israeli-Palestinian Conflict in the Francophone World*, namely 'Slimane Benaïssa, or the Voice of Dissidence', Aslanov takes a deconstructionist and theological approach, paying particular attention to the formative relationship between Benaïssa and Chouraqui.[411] The chapter does not refer to Chouraqui in its title, but nevertheless is dedicated to his 'blessed memory' in the acknowledgement,[412] and indeed acknowledges Chouraqui's influence on Benaïssa. Using the terms interchangeably, Aslanov refers to Chouraqui initially as an 'Algerian-born *pied-noir* Jew', then as an

[409] See Amal N. Ghazal, 'The Other Frontiers of Arab Nationalism: Ibadis, Berbers, and the Arabist-Salafi Press in the Interwar Period', *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, 42 (2010), 105-122, particularly pp. 107, 110-111, 113. See also Pessah Shinar, 'Réflexions sur la symbiose judéo-ibādite en Afrique du Nord', in *Communautés marges sahariennes du Maghreb*, ed. by Michel Abitbol (Jerusalem: Institut Ben-Zvi: 1982), pp. 81-114.

[410] Benaïssa, 'Juif et arabe, deux ou trois choses dont nous avons discuté, André et Moi'.

[411] Aslanov, 'Slimane Benaïssa, or the Voice of Dissidence', pp. 67-80.

[412] *Ibid*., p. 79.

'Algerian-born Francophone Israeli', and finally as an 'Algerian Jew', as opposed to a 'Muslim Algerian' (which is how he refers to Benaïssa, placing religion before nationality without reference to his Berber identity).[413] The first definition is problematic, if not inaccurate. As a Sephardi Jew, can Chouraqui also be a *pied-noir*, or is this an oxymoron? The term *pied-noir* refers to European settlers and their black boots, and has come to represent a community of French citizens who lived in colonial Algeria, and left for France *en masse* during and following decolonisation.[414] Mandel notes that '[r]ecent assessments have concluded that because Jews were included in the wider category of French repatriates, their departure should be understood as "not a Jewish exodus but [a] *pied-noir* exodus"', referring specifically to Todd Shepard among other writers.[415] She

[413] *Ibid*., pp. 68, 73.

[414] Jean-Jacques Jordi has written extensively on *pied-noir* identity formation. See, for example, Jordi, *1962: L'Arrivée des Pieds-Noirs* (Paris: Broché, 2002), and *De l'exode à l'exil: Rapatriés et pieds-noirs en France: l'exemple marseillais, 1954-1992* (Paris: Broché, 1994).

[415] As well as to Shepard, Mandel refers specifically to Sarah Beth Sussman as an example of a writer who collapses the Jewish exodus into *pied-noir* migration. With particular reference to Sussman's thesis, Mandel writes that '[such] [a]rguments [...] suggest that repatriation pushed Algerian Jewish identity into the background, while magnifying allegiances to France [...] downplay the way departures reinforced notions of Jewish particularism'. Maud Mandel, *Muslims and Jews in France: History of a Conflict* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2014), pp. 43, 56. See Sarah Beth Sussman, *Changing Lands, Changing Identities: The Migration of Algerian Jewry to France, 1954-1967* (unpublished doctoral thesis, Stanford University, 2002). The quotation from Shepard can be found in Todd Shepard, *The Invention of*

goes on to problematise this claim, by stating that 'if Jewish departures were similar in kind to others caught up in the process of decolonization, they were not identical in meaning', and subsequently highlights 'the particular contours of the Jewish exodus'.[416] Abderahmen Moumen summarises these positions: '[g]énéralement, les juifs d'Algérie sont étroitement associés aux Européens d'Algérie, même si pour certains, ils constitueraient une population distincte que seule [...] le départ pour la France lierait aux pieds-noirs'.[417] Moreover, he writes specifically of self-identification, noting that '[d]ans le cas des juifs rapatriés d'Algérie, ils se divisent entre ceux qui se dénomment pieds-noirs et ceux revendiquant une appartenance au judaïsme séfarade essentiellement, voire de pair pour certains'.[418] As for Chouraqui, although he refers to the often voluntary French assimilation of Algerian Jews,[419] he nevertheless makes a clear distinction between 'settlers' and 'local Jews', who 'were torn

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Decolonization: The Algerian War and the Remaking of France (Ithaca; London: Cornell University Press, 2006), p. 182.

[416] Mandel, *Muslims and Jews in France*, p. 43, p. 55.

[417] Abderahmen Moumen, 'De l'Algérie à la France. Les conditions de départ et d'accueil des rapatriés, pieds-noirs et harkis en 1962', *Matériaux pour l'histoire de notre temps*, 3 (2010), 60-68 (p. 61).

[418] *Ibid*., pp. 65-66. See also Chantal Benayoun, 'Juifs, pieds-noirs, séfarades ou les trois termes d'une citoyenneté', in *Marseille et le choc des décolonisations*, ed. by Jean-Jacques Jordi and Emile Témime (Aix-en-Provence: Édisud, 1996), pp. 125-32.

[419] See André Chouraqui, *Between East and West: A History of the Jews and North Africa*, trans. by Michael M. Bernet (Illinois: Varda Books, 2001), p. 227.

from the land in which they had been born, from their homes and their share in the country, to be carried away on the wave that swept the French settlers out of North Africa', despite the fact that many North African Jews 'took up arms alongside the nationalists in Tunisia and Morocco, and even in Algeria, in the belief that they were serving a just cause'.[420] As Anidjar writes in *The Jew, the Arab*, '[i]t is one of the ironies of history that Algerian Jews are often considered to be descendants of French *colons*, indeed *pieds-noirs*, rather than as what they historically were in their majority, namely, indigenous Jews of Algeria'.[421]

Chouraqui writes of his 'racines familiales' in his autobiographical essay *Ce que je crois* (1979):

> [l]es Chouraqui […], originaires de la terre d'Israël, avaient probablement erré sur les pourtours de la Méditerranée avant de s'établir en Espagne où ils restèrent jusqu'au moment de leur expulsion au XIV et au XV siècles. Préférant le départ dans l'abandon de tout ce qui était à eux, à la conversion forcée que leur offraient les souverains catholiques, ils prirent le chemin du Maghreb et se fixèrent à Tlemcen, puis à Aïn-Témouchent, où ils vécurent jusqu'à

[420] *Ibid*., p. xx. See also Mandel, *Muslims and Jews in France*, pp. 36-37.
[421] Gil Anidjar, *The Jew, the Arab: A History of the Enemy* (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press), p. 165, n. 5.

> l'autre exil des années 1960, après l'effondrement de l'Algérie française: ils se dirigèrent alors vers la France, l'Amérique ou Israël.[422]

Chouraqui's family – originally from what he terms 'la terre d'Israël', though long before the nation-state was founded – fled Spain for Algeria after the first wave of persecutions in 1391.[423] He explains how his family name likely originates from a place in Spain called Suraka, 'qui dérive lui aussi de la racine arabe *Sherq*, l'Orient'.[424] Chouraqui is thus neither a *pied-noir* nor an Ashkneazi Jew. Rather, he is a Sephardi, if not an oriental (Mizrahi) Jew, a '*Fils de l'Orient*' in the words of his father.[425] Rejecting the '*pied-noir* Jew' designation as an anomaly and aberration, Robert Watson's definition of Jews who lived in Algeria is a pertinent one. Watson positions Jews in Algeria 'in between Algerian Muslims and *pieds-noirs*, forever attached to both, but reducible to neither'.[426] As Chouraqui writes, '[m]on Algérie à moi était différente de celle des Arabes et plus encore de celle des colons'.[427] Hence the title of Chouraqui's book, *Les Juifs d'Afrique du Nord entre*

[422] André Chouraqui, *Ce que je crois* (Paris: B. Grasset, 1979), p. 70.
[423] *Ibid*., pp. 71-72.
[424] *Ibid*., p. 71.
[425] *Ibid*., p. 71, original emphasis.
[426] Robert Watson, 'Memories (Out) of Place: Franco-Judeo-Algerian Autobiographical Writing, 1995–2010', *The Journal of North African Studies*, 17 (2011), 1-22 (p. 1).
[427] Chouraqui, *Ce que je crois*, p. 81.

l'Orient et l'Occident.[428] Kalmar and Penslar write that '[c]entral to all debate on orientalism and the Jews is that, historically, Jews have been seen in the Western world variably and often concurrently as occidental *and* oriental'.[429] Chouraqui rather places Jews of North Africa *between* occidental and oriental.

This *entre-deux*, by which the Jews of Algeria are 'entre l'Orient et l'Occident', neither defined as Muslim Jews nor as *pied-noir* Jews (both politically charged), corresponds with the concept of the grey zone, itself a charged term to which Aslanov refers only in passing.[430] Drawing from Primo Levi, who wrote of the grey zone as one 'of half-tints and complexities' resisting the 'desire for simplification', Susannah Radstone defines this 'equivocal ethical space' as a 'zone in which neither "pure" victimhood, nor "pure" perpetration hold sway'.[431] As Aslanov notes, '[a]fter the bestowal of French citizenship on the whole Jewish community of Algeria in

[428] André Chouraqui, *Les Juifs d'Afrique du Nord entre l'Orient et l'Occident* (Paris: Fondation nationale des Sciences Politiques, 1965). See also André Chouraqui, *Les Juifs d'Afrique du Nord; marche vers l'Occident* (Paris: Presses universitaires de France, 1952). Note the development from 'vers l'Occident' to 'entre l'Orient et l'Occident'.

[429] Kalmar and Penslar, 'Orientalism and the Jews: An Introduction', pp. xiii-xl (p. xiii), original emphasis.

[430] Aslanov, 'Slimane Benaïssa, or the Voice of Dissidence', pp. 70, 74.

[431] Susannah Radstone, 'Social bonds and psychical order: Testimonies', *Cultural Values*, 5 (2001), 59-78 (p. 61, p. 75). See also Craps' definition of 'The Grey zone' in *Critical Dictionary and Encyclopedia of Words Related to Memory and Testimony*, 21 April 2015, <http://memories-testimony.com/notice/grey-zone-2/> [accessed 7 September 2016].

1870, Algerian Jews constituted a kind of grey zone in the bipolarity between the colonizers and the colonized'.[432] This can be read in terms of implication, by which Algerian Jews are neither victimised (if not colonised) subjects nor perpetrating (if not colonising) collaborators in French imperialism. Rather they are implicated in a colonial system with divide-and-rule tactics, by which they were given a privileged status over their Muslim counterparts, most notably in the case of Algeria where they received French citizenship. According to Rothberg's definition of 'implicated subjects', Franco-Algerian Jews can be seen to have 'enable[d] and benefit[ed] from traumatic violence without taking part in it directly'.[433] As Sidra DeKoven Ezrahi writes, the 'grey zones' raise 'questions of complicity and ambivalence'.[434] Although Rothberg concedes that 'some [non-legalistic] notions of complicity could be folded into notions of implication', he argues that implication is a broader form of historical relation than complicity (encompassing guilt, culpability, and participation), as it is beyond legal accountability.[435] Referring to Mark

[432] Aslanov, 'Slimane Benaïssa, or the Voice of Dissidence', p. 74.
[433] Rothberg, 'Trauma Theory, Implicated Subjects, and the Question of Israel/Palestine' (para 3 of 10).
[434] Sidra DeKoven Ezrahi, 'A Personal Postscript', in *Marking Evil: Holocaust Memory in the Global Age*, ed. by Amos Goldberg and Haim Hazan (Oxford; New York: Berghahn, 2015), pp. 345-353 (p. 346).
[435] Michael Rothberg, 'Michael Rothberg discussing "Multidirectional Memory and the Implicated Subject"', *YouTube*, 3 March 2016,

Sanders' conceptualisation of complicity, foregrounded in the study of apartheid, Rothberg justifies his choice of the term 'implication': 'Like the proximate term *complicity* (see Sanders), but with more conceptual fluidity, *implication* draws attention to how we are *entwined with* and *folded into* ("im-pli-cated in") histories and situations that surpass our agencies as individual subjects'.[436] It is precisely due to the communal nature of the ethno-religious identity of Jewishness/Judaism that the Jew in or from Algeria cannot be an individual subject outside of the collective, and is thus implicated in French colonialism and the Algerian War of Independence.[437]

At the same time, Algerian Jews were themselves subject to (if not victims of) the arbitrary nature of colonial and anti-Semitic rule (in its broadest sense, encompassing both Jews and Arabs),[438] particularly in the instigation, abrogation, and re-establishment of the Crémieux Decree. Moumen writes that

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<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zzAQrsel8b0&feature=youtu.be> [accessed 12 December 2016].

[436] Rothberg, 'Michael Rothberg discussing "Multidirectional Memory and the Implicated Subject"'. See Mark Sanders, *Complicities: The Intellectual and Apartheid* (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2002).

[437] For more on this, see Mandel, 'Decolonization and Migration: Constructing the North African Jew', in *Muslims and Jews in France*, pp. 35-58.

[438] See Shipler, *Arab and Jew* (2015), pp. 394-95; and Gil Anidjar, *Semites: Race, Religion, Literature* (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 2008), particularly pp. 28-36. Anidjar writes that the Semite is an 'invention articulated around the disappearance of a distinction (between Jew and Arab, race and religion)'. Anidjar, *Semites*, pp. 32-33.

'[l]e décret Crémieux fut le point de départ de l'intégration, voire de l'assimilation, des juifs d'Algérie à la France'.[439] On the one hand, then, assimilation was enforced by French legislation (notably in the Crémieux Decree), and on the other it was chosen by many North African Jews who believed it would bring emancipation, or at least saw the socio-economic benefits that came with it. Chouraqui writes of the subsequent disillusionment arising from the abrogation of the Crémieux Decree, in relation to the '[n]os pères les Gaulois' *devise*:

> [l]es lois de Vichy m'avaient chassé de la citoyenneté française qui avait été octroyée à mes arrière-grands-parents, en Algérie coloniale, et pendant cinq générations nous avions fait tout ce que nous pouvions, pauvres innocents, pour nous convaincre que nos pères étaient bien les Gaulois et non les Hébreux.[440]

[439] Moumen maintains that 'les rapatriés' who sought refuge in France following decolonisation are made up of three dominant categories, namely 'pieds-noirs, […] juifs d'Algérie […] [et] harkis'. Moumen, 'De l'Algérie à la France', p. 60. See Shepard, "Repatriation Rather Than Aliyah: The Jews of France and the End of French Algeria", in *The Invention of Decolonization: The Algerian War and the Remaking of France*, pp.169-82.

[440] Chouraqui, *Ce que je crois*, p. 169. Chouraqui writes of when this *devise* was introduced into the classroom as a defining moment in his westernisation: 'Avec ces paroles, […] l'Occident pénétra dans ma vie pour y écraser la semence qu'une résistance deux fois millénaire avait permis à mes ancêtres de déposer en moi. […] D'un coup mon Orient s'effaçait: mes ancêtres n'étaient plus Abraham, Isaac et Jacob, mais les Gaulois'. *Ibid*., p. 103.

The verb 'octroyer' is indicative of France's *mission civilisatrice* which 'granted' citizenship rights to those it deemed 'worthy' when convenient to do so, while 'pauvres innocents' suggests a lack of agency, if not a claim to victimhood. According to Patrick Weil, '[t]he Jews whose full French nationality was withdrawn in 1940 in Algeria […] experienced a trauma that time has not eradicated either for them – as Jacques Derrida asserts – or for their children'.[441] Referring at once to his failed assimilation into French society and his Mizrahi/Sephardi origins combined with his Algerian nativism, Chouraqui describes himself as 'un bizarre mélange d'Orient et d'Occident: j'étais partout un étranger; nulle part je ne me sentais chez moi'.[442] From his perspective, it is not until he immigrates to Israel that he feels he belongs, having returned home, as it were: '[m]oi, je suis la Révolution, non parce que je le veux mais parce que je le suis, étant tout simplement *de retour chez moi*, à

[441] Patrick Weil, *How to Be French: Nationality in the Making Since 1789* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2008), p. 252. See also Benjamin Stora, *Les Trois exils: Juifs d'Algérie* (Paris: Stock, 2007), pp.104-7. Katz writes about the Muslim reaction to the abrogation of the decree as follows: 'the repeal of the Crémieux Decree had provoked little enthusiasm among Algerian Muslims [...]. North African Muslims did not seek a shared state of oppression with native Jews, but rather one of recognition or full equality, or both, with French colonists. In the absence of tangible improvements in Muslim status, however, the possibility of restoring Jews to French citizenship seemed to symbolize their own persistent lack of equality'. Ethan B. Katz, *The Burdens of Brotherhood: Jews and Muslims from North Africa to France* (Cambridge, Massachusetts; London: Harvard University Press, 2015), p. 139.

[442] Chouraqui, *Ce que je crois*, p. 132.

Jérusalem'.[443] Here, Chouraqui attempts to re-establish a link with an ancient Hebrew identity originating in the Holy Land so as to legitimise a Jewish-majority state; 'nos pères les Gaulois' becomes or perhaps, by his logic, returns to 'nos pères les Hébreux'.

Similarly, in *La Terre intérieure* (1976), Memmi writes of his own identity as follows: 'j'étais donc, je suis, de culture et d'attaches françaises, mais aussi un Juif et un Nord-Africain [...]. Je m'avouais Juif et je défendais les Arabes'.[444] Yet, in *Le Nomade immobile* (2000), he demonstrates a shift in self-identification: 'j'ai décidé d'être humaniste, laïque et rationaliste: humaniste pour la morale, laïque pour l'organisation sociale, et rationaliste pour la pensée'.[445] As Patrick Crowley argues,

> in Memmi's later work [...] [the] question of difference and identity is increasingly subsumed within a view that promotes the universal. Humanism comes to offer Memmi a way of reconciling differences but in a way that brings them to brook within a very French paradigm of the universal that subsumes identities.[446]

[443] *Ibid*., p. 210, emphasis mine.
[444] Memmi, *La Terre intérieure*, p. 150.
[445] Albert Memmi, *Le Nomade immobile* (Paris: Arléa, 2000), pp. 258-59.
[446] Patrick Crowley, 'Memmi and Béji: Decolonization and the Place of the "Human" within "Humanism"', *International Journal of Francophone Studies*, 15 (2012), 415-33 (p. 420). See also Patrick Crowley, 'Albert Memmi: The Conflict of Legacies', in *Postcolonial Thought in the Francophone World*, ed.

In his seminal work, *Portrait du colonisé, précédé du portrait du colonisateur* (1957), Memmi writes of 'les deux univers [...] portés par les deux langues, [qui] sont en conflit: […] ceux du colonisateur et du colonisé'.[447] The French language, which is labelled here as the language of colonialism, would later come to represent universalism for Memmi. As Crowley notes, 'Memmi's later work is more vertical, more shaped by his thought on the universal as an organizing paradigm for humanism'.[448] While Memmi advocates secular humanism (laïcité) and national liberation (of which, he claims, Zionism), Chouraqui and Benaïssa advocate interfaith dialogue and peaceful coexistence in *L'Avenir oublié*, as shall become clear.

In an article entitled 'Citizenship in the Colony: Naturalization Law and Legal Assimilation in 19th Century Algeria', Andrea Smith first introduces the Jews of Algeria as 'indigenous Jews': '[t]he indigenous Jews, sharing characteristics of both colonized and colonists, were especially liminal'.[449] 'Were they more "colonist" or "colonized"?' she asks.[450] Interestingly, she uses the term 'Arab Jew' as synonymous to 'indigenous Jews' in her conclusion. Memmi, as an anti-colonialist

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by Charles Forsdick and David Murphy (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2009), pp. 126-35.

[447] Memmi, *Portrait du colonisé*, pp. 141-42.

[448] Crowley, 'Memmi and Béji', p. 429.

[449] Andrea L. Smith, 'Citizenship in the Colony: Naturalization Law and Legal Assimilation in 19th Century Algeria', *PoLAR*, 19 (1996), 33-50 (p. 33).

[450] *Ibid*., p. 41.

writer influential in the debate around Arab-Jews particularly in the Francophone context, writes in *L'Homme dominé* that, '[j]e n'ai pu faire *Le Portrait du Colonisé* (et même celui du *Colonisateur* [...]) que parce que j'étais moi-même *indigène* dans un pays de colonisation, parce que j'ai vécu la relation coloniale'.[451] This experience of French colonisation as an indigenous Jew of North Africa is a combination of '[a]yant pâti des institutions et de mœurs coloniales, [et] ayant éprouvé le poids des privilèges du Colonisateur'.[452] Memmi talks about his position as a Tunisian Jew as somewhere between coloniser and colonised, while maintaining that the Jews are an oppressed people in need of liberation, which they can only find in the State of Israel. He speaks of the Tunisian struggle among other North African liberation movements, which he argues left the Jews with no choice but to have their own state:

> après avoir approuvé la libération du Maghreb, voilà que je m'attelais à un examen du destin juif séparé, qui supposait donc une espèce de divorce avec les communautés musulmanes d'Afrique du Nord. Je […] le voyais bien, je l'expérimentais tous les jours: notre destin ne coïncidait pas avec celui de ces jeunes nations, heureusement écloses.[453]

[451] Memmi, *L'Homme dominé*, pp. 101-2.
[452] *Ibid*., p. 102.
[453] *Ibid*., p. 103.

As Mandel notes, hostility towards Jews was only one factor among many 'push-and-pull factors' that led to the mass immigration of North African Jews to France and Israel, including 'fear, lack of opportunity, poverty, anti-Jewish oppression, encouragement by some Jewish and Israeli officials, and Israel's relaxation of migration restrictions'.[454]

Elsewhere, Memmi speaks of 'notre condition de colonisés, par les Arabes puis par les Français', implying that '[les] Juifs orientaux' – as they came to be known in the Israeli context (that is, Mizrahim) – were colonised first by the Arabs and then by the French.[455] Smith highlights Jewish resistance to French assimilation, another argument to be used against the '*pied-noir*' label. Conversely, Lizabeth Zach implies that Jews (were) assimilated and by implication groups them with *pied-noirs*. When speaking of the naturalisation of non-French Europeans, she writes: '[s]ome assimilated, *like the Jews*, as legal *and* cultural citizens, adopting the language, habits, and values of the metropolitan French'.[456] Jérémy Guedj makes a similar comparison: 'les juifs d'Algérie entretiennent [...] des liens importants avec *les autres pieds-noirs*, ce qui recrée la situation d'"entre-deux" qu'ils occupaient tant bien que

[454] Mandel, *Muslims and Jews in France*, p. 42.
[455] Memmi, *La Terre intérieure*, p. 203.
[456] Lizabeth Zach, 'French and Algerian Identity Formation in 1890s Algiers', *French Colonial History*, 2 (2002), 115-43 (p. 121), emphasis mine.

mal en Algérie'.[457] His article takes us right up to President Abdelaziz Bouteflika, who acknowledged the contribution of Jewish culture to Algerian identity and supposedly welcomed *pieds-noirs* back to Algeria in 1999.[458] This appeal is reminiscent of former Libyan prime minister Muammar Gaddafi's call for Jews to return to Arab lands, which Memmi uses as a starting point for his essay 'Qu'est-ce qu'un juif-arabe?', as we shall see in the following chapter.[459] Zach differentiates 'Jews' from '*indigènes*' (Arabs), while Smith, as we have seen, speaks of 'indigenous Jews', possibly in order to give weight to the Arab Jew designation and simultaneously discredit the '*pied-noir*' one. Memmi, on the other hand, uses the indigenous claim to highlight the long-standing existence of Jews in North Africa, before the Muslim conquest, as 'natifs de ces pays dits Arabes, originaires de ces contrées bien avant l'arrivée des Arabes'.[460]

Language, Exile, and Encounter

Many Berber/Amazigh writers feel this sense of being an indigenous people first colonised by Arabs and then by the French, which goes some way in explaining the affiliation

[457] Jérémy Guedj, 'Juifs et musulmans d'Algérie en France: Cinquante ans d'exil partagé, entre mémoire, échanges et déchirements', *Hommes et migrations*, 1295 (2015), 144-154 (p. 150), emphasis mine.
[458] *Ibid*., pp. 151-52.
[459] See Memmi, *Juifs et Arabes*, pp. 49-59.
[460] *Ibid*., p. 59, n. 2.

Benaïssa feels with Chouraqui as a fellow formerly colonised writer exiled from Algeria, the country of his birth. Yet Benaïssa came to embrace the cultural and linguistic legacy of this phenomenon. In my interview with him, he stated, 'J'ai trois cultures. Je suis berbère, arabophone et francophone. Je suis tri-culturel. Je dis tri-culturel, je ne suis pas trilingue, je suis tri-culturel, ça c'est fondamental'.[461] When I asked him what his relationship is to *la francophonie*, he responded:

> Être francophone, c'est appartenir à l'espace de la langue française, mais cet espace a une origine coloniale. Donc c'est un espace linguistique qui a été créé pour unir tout l'empire colonial de l'époque et qui dit unité d'espace dit unité de langue.[462]

Notably, he differentiates between *la francophonie* as 'l'espace de la langue française' originating from colonialism, and 'la langue française' *en soi-même*:

> Ma relation à la langue française? C'est ma langue! Au sens où quand j'écris en langue française, je poursuis cette langue. Écrire, c'est aussi travailler sur des mots. Bien entendu, cette langue est porteuse d'une culture, mais c'est précisément à

[461] Benaïssa qtd. in Vince, '"Je commence là où ça se tait"', p. 7.
[462] *Ibid*., p. 5.

> partir de cette culture que je travaille avec ma mixité, mon mélange arabe-français inscrit en moi.[463]

Thus he recognises the colonial origin of *la francophonie,* while also making the French language his own. In other words, he recognises that, as a French-speaking Algerian, he belongs to the Francophone space with its colonial origins, yet the French language belongs to him, as indicated in the personal possession pronoun. In this pursuit of language, its unity is replaced with plurality. For Benaïssa, his primary identity is as a Berber, yet this coexists with Arab and Francophone on a linguistic and cultural level, thus he is a Franco-Maghrebi writer, alongside Chouraqui, whose primary identity is as a Jew and who cannot be accurately described as a *pied-noir*.

Aslanov compares Benaïssa's exile from Algeria during the Black Decade with that of Algerian Jews thirty years previously, and postulates that Benaïssa 'might have perceived [this situation of exile] as somehow similar to what had been experienced by Algerian Jews', as '[l]ike them, he was the object of a fanatical hatred to the extent that he was reduced to the status of the Other and rejected by his own country'.[464] Following this line of argument, Aslanov concludes that 'this sense of identification may explain

[463] *Ibid*., p. 5.
[464] Aslanov, 'Slimane Benaïssa, or the Voice of Dissidence', p. 74.

Benaïssa's self-identification with the Jewish Other and his commitment to the dialogue between Jews and Arabs from a perspective that is definitely different from the monolithic strands of the Arab mainstream'.[465] To this sense of identification with the Jewish Other can be added the Berber dimension. Indeed, it is worth noting the long coexistence of indigenous Berbers and Jews in Algeria, which predates the Arab conquest, as well as the contemporary Amazigh movement's approach to the State of Israel. As Bruce Maddy-Weitzman writes, one 'aspect of the movement's overall orientation has been a quiet amenability toward Jews and Judaism' alongside 'an unwillingness to line up reflexively alongside of the Arab world in its struggles against the State of Israel'.[466] This can perhaps further explain why Benaïssa 'has chosen to deal with the Israeli-Palestinian conflict from an unconventional perspective', as Aslanov puts it.[467] There is a sense here that Benaïssa's affiliation with Jews is linked to his experience of exile and otherisation (as a dissident Berber writer), which leads him to dialogue on and off the stage.

In this way, Benaïssa could be seen as a 'pied-noir musulman' by Aziz Chouaki's

[465] *Ibid*., p. 75.
[466] Maddy-Weitzman, *Berber Identity Movement and the Challenge to North African Studies*, p. 146. See also p. 147.
[467] Aslanov, 'Slimane Benaïssa, or the Voice of Dissidence', p. 67.

definition,[468] but again this is oxymoronic, particularly considering that the term *pied-noir* refers specifically to the black boots worn by a community of European settlers who were to claim exile status from (a notably French) Algeria, as opposed to Algerian natives (of which Jews and Berbers). Resisting categorisation in a similar way to Chouraqui, Benaïssa writes of a mixed heritage: 'My language is plurality, my cultural place is my mixed ancestry. [...] Thus, I am the child of history and not of my parents'.[469] Before leaving his native country of Algeria for France, Benaïssa wrote his plays in Algerian Arabic. However, during the 1990s in particular, 'l'arabisation "forcenée" a amené tout le monde à bégayer, a détruit la communication',[470] especially for the Berber population. As Mohamed Benrabah writes, '[o]ne of the main objectives of Arabization was to make Algerians abandon French as well as their first languages (Algerian Arabic and Tamazight or Berber) in favour of Literary Arabic as the primary means of communication and socialization'.[471] In my interview with him, Benaïssa stated that 'j'ai

[468] See Aziz Chouaki, 'Confitures et Bobos', in *Une Enfance outremer,* ed. by Leïla Sebbar (Paris: Seuil, 2011), pp. 59-72.
[469] Benaïssa qtd. in Salhi, 'Slimane Benaïssa from Exile in the Theatre to Theatre in Exile', p. 373.
[470] Benaïssa qtd. in Christiane Chaulet-Achour, 'Slimane Benaïssa: de l'expression théâtrale à l'écriture romanesque', *Revues plurielles,* 33-34 (1999), 109-20 (p. 109).
[471] Mohamed Benrabah, 'Language Maintenance and Spread: French in Algeria', *International Journal of Francophone Studies*, 10 (2007), 193-215 (p. 195).

toujours dit que ma langue maternelle est étrangère au pays, ma vraie langue nationale est étrangère au pays'.[472]

Benaïssa's linguistic trajectory from dialectal Arabic to French is the opposite to the one taken by Algerian playwright Kateb Yacine, who began his writing career in French before turning to Algerian Arabic in order to reach the masses through theatre: 'Nous travaillons toujours en dialectal, pour la bonne raison que nous voulons toucher l'ensemble du public et pas seulement une partie du public. C'est-à-dire les gens du peuple, le grand public'.[473] Benaïssa justifies his shift to French as follows:

> Je tiens un discours sur l'Algérie au théâtre mais qui dépasse largement ce cadre. Je crois que c'était déjà le cas dans mes pièces en arabe dialectal qui posaient des questions d'universaliste. Cela se confirme avec la langue française puisque c'est une langue qui est ouverte vers l'universel, qui permet la communication.[474]

At first glance, this appears to resonate with Memmi's eulogy of the French language in his preface to *La Culture francophone en Israël*, in which he writes that '[l]e français est

[472] Benaïssa qtd. in Vince, '"Je commence là où ça se tait"', pp. 6-7.
[473] Kateb Yacine qtd. in Casas Arlette, 'Entretien avec Kateb Yacine', *Mots*, 57 (1998), 96-108 (p. 99).
[474] Benaïssa qtd. in Chaulet-Achour, 'Slimane Benaïssa', p. 112.

ma manière de penser l'universel'.[475] Yet the two perspectives are markedly different: Benaïssa speaks of French as 'une langue qui est ouverte vers l'universel' while Memmi speaks of French as 'ma manière de penser l'universel'. Memmi considers French to be his own – and apparently only – subjective way of conceptualising universalism. Benaïssa, on the other hand, is not limited to French; indeed, he explored the same questions of universalism in dialectal Arabic. Gross writes that, 'his decision to perform in French [...] marked his embrace of French as an integral part of Algerian identity and its indisputable *mémoire commune*', 'allowed for a critical distance', and provided him with 'the opportunity to engage larger audiences in reflections on global violence'.[476] For Benaïssa, French, like Arabic, is one language among many, which is itself multipliable and heterogeneous. He does not advocate the universality of one monolithic language *per se* but rather advocates plurality of and within languages or, as Harrison puts it, 'not a monolanguage, not even a *bi-langue*, but a *pluri-langue*'.[477]

Meanwhile, Memmi writes that it was through the French language that he gained

[475] Memmi, 'Israël francophone', p. 24.
[476] Janice Gross, 'Performing Beyond Trauma: Stages of Recovery in Slimane Benaïssa's Theatre', in *The Unspeakable: Representations of Trauma in Francophone Literature and Art*, ed. by Névine El Nossery and Amy L. Hubbell (Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishers, 2013), pp. 73- 93 (p. 74).
[477] Harrison, *Transcolonial Maghreb*, p. 129.

access to 'la rationalité, c'est-à-dire à la liberté, intellectuelle',[478] and he describes French as 'la langue de l'homme raisonnable et rationnel, [...] la langue du citoyen discipliné mais sourcilleux d'un pays démocratique'.[479] In speaking of the French language as one of reason, liberty, and democracy, Memmi recalls the European humanist Enlightenment or Age of Reason. Chouraqui problematises this rose-tinted view of the French language. As he learns of the fate of French Jews during the Second World War, he joins the French resistance movement, disillusioned with the enlightenment France had hitherto represented for him: 'La France, la France bien-aimée de mes études et de mes éveils, elle à qui je devais ma langue et ma culture, avait accepté que je sois rejeté de son sein, que je sois réduit à l'état de paria'.[480] Thus, the occidentalised oriental finds himself a rejected foreigner, an outcast or pariah, an undesirable even: both in the country of his birth (Algeria), particularly as it gains independence as a Muslim-majority democracy, and in the country of his supposed adoption (France), most acutely during the Vichy Regime, and thus he (re)turns to the Land of Israel. Subsequently, disenchanted with the French language and all it represented, Chouraqui turns his attention instead to Hebrew, which he eulogises in *Ce*

[478] Memmi, 'Israël francophone', pp. 23-24.
[479] *Ibid*., p. 24.
[480] Chouraqui, *Ce que je crois*, p. 180.

que je crois.[481] Moreover, he sees a connection between the development of Hebrew and Arabic as Semitic languages which, rather than being monolithic, are heterogonous and interactive: 'l'arabe et l'hébreu sont des langues jumelles qui ont permis l'approfondissement de cultures de même essence'.[482] This further confounds the oft-made 'distinction of Arab and Jew as two polarized identities having been constituted independently of each other', as Anidjar puts it in *Semites*.[483] Chouraqui claims that '[l]a langue arabe inspira parmi les juifs la renaissance de l'hébreu',[484] and describes how these languages developed alongside one another:

> [l]'arabe, davantage encore l'hébreu, *langues sœurs* étaient, elles aussi, assoupies dans des contextes histoires et des circonstances fort différents, mais il fallait les arracher toutes deux à leur sommeil, les réhabiliter, réapprendre à les bien connaître pour qu'elles redeviennent les instruments adéquats d'interprétation du monde moderne.[485]

More specifically, Chouraqui argues that the development of these twin sister-Semitic languages coincided with the rise of Zionism

[481] See Chouraqui, *Ce que je crois*, pp. 208-9. See also André Chouraqui, *Retour aux racines: Entretiens avec Jacques Deschanel* (Paris: Centurion, 1981), p. 35.
[482] Chouraqui, *Ce que je crois*, p. 28.
[483] Anidjar, *Semites*, p. 35.
[484] Chouraqui, *Ce que je crois*, p. 285.
[485] *Ibid*., pp. 286-87, emphasis mine.

and Arab nationalism. These nationalistic endeavours, he argues, arose from anti-Semitism and colonialism (both forms of 'racisme occidental' according to Chouraqui), respectively: '[p]endant que les juifs mouraient dans les camps de concentration, les Arabes vivaient leur propre drame dans leurs pays dominés par les puissances coloniales'.[486] In comparing Arab nationalism with Zionism, perhaps in order to justify the latter, Chouraqui's argument resonates with that of Memmi, according to whom the State of Israel 'représente le résultat [...] de la libération du Juif, tout comme la décolonisation représente la libération des peuples arabes ou noirs d'Asie et d'Afrique'.[487]

In relation to Zionism, Benaïssa speaks of his relationship to Chouraqui as follows:

> [l]a démarche avec Chouraqui, c'est de passer par un dialogue avec quelqu'un d'autre. C'est vrai que je n'ai pas choisi un juif de gauche antisioniste. Cela n'aurait eu aucun intérêt, j'aurais parlé à moi-même! Le problème est justement de dialoguer et de faire un travail avec un véritable sioniste et, de surcroît, un Pied-noir d'origine algérienne.[488]

[486] *Ibid*., p. 286.
[487] Memmi, *L'Homme dominé*, p. 119.
[488] Benaïssa qtd. in Chaulet-Achour, 'Slimane Benaïssa', p. 114.

Here, Benaïssa differentiates himself from the 'other' interlocutor. Disassociating himself from Zionism, he adopts the affiliative identity of 'juif de gauche antisioniste', in a similar way to Said claiming to be 'the last Jewish intellectual', as will be explored in the following chapter.[489] In so doing, Benaïssa suggests that Zionism is an inherently right-wing position, while associating himself with anti-Zionist left-wing Jews, some of whom self-identify as 'Arab Jews', particularly Mizrahim in intellectual circles.[490] However, Benaïssa's description of Chouraqui as 'un Pied-noir d'origine algérienne' simply does not hold because, as we have seen, *pied-noir* suggests European origins as opposed to Algerian indigeneity. Elsewhere, Benaïssa emphasises the shared heritage and common ground of Algeria: 'notre rencontre était une rencontre entre Algériens d'abord. C'est parce que nous parlions la « même » langue: l'Algérie. Nous nous sommes tout de suite reconnus, appréciés, estimés, une confiance qui ressemblait à un défi s'est installé entre nous'.[491] It is this 'défi' which Benaïssa takes up in dialogically engaging with Chouraqui: 'Outre l'Algérie, notre terre natale, source de notre complicité tellurique, nos échanges se

[489] See Hochberg, 'Edward Said: "The Last Jewish Intellectual"'.
[490] See Behar, 'Mizrahim, Abstracted: Action, Reflection, and the Academization of the Mizrahi Cause', pp. 89-100.
[491] Benaïssa, 'Juif et arabe, deux ou trois choses dont nous avons discuté, André et Moi'.

situaient au cœur même du conflit qui oppose nos deux peuples et leurs deux religions'.[492]

In an interview with Christiane Chaulet-Achour, Benaïssa describes how he first encountered Chouraqui through the latter's *Lettre à un ami arabe* (1994 [1969]), in a similar way to how Zenatti encountered Appelfeld first through his texts and then in person, as we saw in the previous chapter. In his tribute to Chouraqui, Benaïssa states, 'vous pourrez dire qu'André Chouraqui avait un ami arabe même si je ne le suis pas tout à fait puisque je suis berbère'.[493] In its title, *Lettre à un ami arabe*, Chouraqui's book recalls Camus' *Lettres à un ami allemand* (1944) and can be situated within an epistolary genre specifically relating to conflict and attempts at reconciliation, but which themselves can be polemical in nature. [494] Yet Chouraqui places his letter within the genre of an 'essai romancé'.[495] In *Lettre à un ami arabe*, the first-person narrative voice is

[492] *Ibid*.
[493] *Ibid*.
[494] Albert Camus, *Lettres à un ami allemand* (Paris: Gallimard, 1945). See also Ibrahim Souss, *Lettre à un ami juif* (Paris: Seuil, 1988); Élie Barnavi, *Lettre d'un ami israélien à l'ami palestinien* (Paris: Flammarion, 1988); and Régis Debray, *À un ami israélien: Avec une réponse d'Élie Barnavi* (Paris: Flammarion, 2010). In a review of Barnavi's response to Souss, Dominique Vidal writes: 'Partisan avoué de la négociation avec l'OLP et de la création d'un État palestinien aux côtés d'Israël, Elie Barnavi serait à vrai dire plus convainquant s'il ne cédait, parfois, à un goût immodéré pour la polémique'. Dominique Vidal, 'Lettre d'un ami israélien à l'ami palestinien', *Le Monde diplomatique*, December 1988, <https://www.monde-diplomatique.fr/1988/12/VIDAL/41392> [accessed 6 September 2016].
[495] Chouraqui, *Lettre à un ami arabe*, pp. 267-68.

that of an indigenous Palestinian Jew turned Israeli named Mattatias Mizrahi (note the symbolic surname), speaking to a Palestinian Arab and fellow Jerusalemite named Ahmed Benghanem. The 'letter' begins with what is known in Israel as the reunification of Jerusalem, when East Jerusalem was annexed, an event which was to be remembered by Palestinians as the beginning of its occupation and part of the Naksa:[496] 'Le 7 juin à l'aube, les bulldozers abattirent […] le mur de béton et d'acier qui, depuis dix-neuf ans séparait Jérusalem de Jérusalem […]: nous nous retrouvâmes, face à face, dans une ville ravagée par trois jours de guerre'.[497] Chouraqui recalls how he started writing the book '[d]ans un village arabe de Galilée' prior to the Six-Day War, during which the book 'prit sa forme définitive, dans les rues de Jérusalem réunifiée mais partout jonchée de cadavres juifs et Arabes qui mêlaient ainsi leur sang'.[498] Chouraqui claims to feel a responsibility towards these voiceless victims of war on both sides, who are unified in blood

[496] Speaking of the fortieth-year 'celebrations' in 2007, Ziad AbuZayyad writes that '[t]he Palestinians view these celebrations as essentially the commemoration of the occupation of Jerusalem and not its unification'. Ziad AbuZayyad, 'The "Unification" of Jerusalem', *Palestine-Israel Journal of Politics, Economics and Culture* 14 (2007), <http://www.pij.org/details.php?id=1045> [access 6 September 2016]. In this way it is a microcosm of Israeli Independence Day and Nakba Day, which in close succession celebrate Israeli independence and lament Palestinian loss of land in an almost palimpsestic manner, where one narrative supersedes the other.

[497] Chouraqui, *Lettre à un ami arabe*, p. 15.

[498] *Ibid*., p. 5. See also pp. 264-66.

over soil, and completed his book '[s]ous le coup de cette émotion': '[d]evant eux, je me jurai qu'il fallait m'engager à fond dans le combat de la paix pour empêcher le retour de telles horreurs'.[499] According to Benaïssa, 'depuis 1967, nous avons été, en tant qu'algériens et s'appuyant sur un antisémitisme latent et profond, déjà existant dans les sociétés arabes, à tel point que le rejet d'Israel est devenu un vecteur identitaire de la société et non une position politique'.[500]

Benaïssa therefore sought to address this perceived imbalance by adapting the book/letter into a play as a response. Recalling a conversation with Chouraqui, he notes, '*Lettre à un arabe* est un appel au dialogue. J'ai voulu répondre à cet appel… répondre à *Lettre à un ami arabe* pour moi, c'est venir vers vous et l'adapter au théâtre, c'est dialoguer avec vous'.[501] Yet elsewhere he admits, '[m]ais quand je l'ai fait, ça n'allait pas, ça faisait trop 1969'.[502] It was at this point that Benaïssa decided to visit Israel with Chouraqui, while continuing their discussion, in order to write about events that were more current:

> [j]e lui ai dit: "[…] Ce serait dommage que ça se limite à un discours de 69 alors que nous sommes

[499] *Ibid*., p. 5.
[500] Benaïssa, 'Juif et arabe, deux ou trois choses dont nous avons discuté, André et Moi'.
[501] *Ibid*.
[502] Benaïssa qtd. in Chaulet-Achour, 'Slimane Benaïssa', p. 114.

> tous les deux vivants, que la réalité est encore vivante. […] Donne-moi à voir Israël et on va vers quelque chose de complètement nouveau." Et il a répondu: "Tu écris. Moi je te suis".[503]

Benaïssa calls this 'le pacte des poètes': '« Écris, je te suis et on verra après » Ce qui veut dire: « soit libre, je serais complice de ta liberté mais sois juste »'.[504]

Thus Chouraqui voluntarily took a backseat role in the writing of *L'Avenir oublié* (as can be seen in his acquiescence in reported speech) which, far from being limited to Benaïssa's *rencontre* with Chouraqui, was also influenced by other encounters in the region. According to Benaïssa, during his trip across Israel (from Lebanon to Jordan),

> [j]'ai vu toutes les faces. Par Chouraqui, j'ai eu accès au côté israélien. Grâce à un journaliste juif d'origine égyptienne, Joseph el Gazi, j'ai vu l'autre face, "Moi, m'a-t-il dit, je vais te montrer les torts et les travers de l'Etat d'Israël". Et par l'ambassade de France […] et par ma qualité d'Algérien et ma langue, j'ai eu accès aux Palestiniens.[505]

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[503] *Ibid*., p. 114. Elsewhere, Benaïssa states that '[é]crire une pièce sur Israël sans connaître Israël était une hérésie'. Benaïssa, 'Juif et arabe, deux ou trois choses dont nous avons discuté, André et Moi'.

[504] Benaïssa, 'Juif et arabe, deux ou trois choses dont nous avons discuté, André et Moi'. Hence 'avec la complicité de'.

[505] Benaïssa qtd. in Chaulet-Achour, 'Slimane Benaïssa', pp. 114-15.

It is interesting how Benaïssa refers in this interview to Joseph el Gazi as 'un [...] juif d'origine égyptienne' while he refers to Chouraqui as 'un véritable sioniste et [...] un Pied-noir d'origine algérienne', presumably placing the former within the category 'juif de gauche antisioniste', with which he claims to have more of an affinity or affiliation.[506] Indeed, Joseph el Gazi's claim that he will show Benaïssa 'les torts et les travers de l'Etat d'Israël' suggests he is not an unquestioning supporter of the Jewish state. Nevertheless, Chouraqui's contribution and specifically the Six-Day War play a significant role in *L'Avenir oublié*, forming part of the backdrop to the conflict and its representation. The Jewish Israeli protagonist, Joseph, perhaps named after the Egyptian Jew, was born during the Six-Day War, and the Arab Israeli protagonist, Antoine-Nasser, although in his mother's womb at the time, nevertheless claims to know 'la scène par cœur': '[c]haque fois que ma mère avait peur, son ventre devenait transparent. J'entendais tout, je voyais tout… Quand elle était tranquille, alors je dormais… En neuf mois, j'ai très peu dormi…' (*AO*, p. 29).

As opposed to evoking a transnational concept of Arabness through a call to religious, cultural or ethnic solidarity, Benaïssa points to the commonality of the Arabic language and his 'qualité d'Algérien'

[506] *Ibid*., p. 114.

(a postcolonial national identity), as being instrumental in gaining access to Palestinian perspectives. In response to the interviewer's question, '*Veux-tu nous parler de* L'Avenir oublié*? à la fois proche et éloigné de l'Algérie?*', Benaïssa claims that Israel and Algeria are '[i]dentique et semblable' in that they concern 'ce problème de fraternité en guerre, de familles prises dans la même histoire'.[507] Both are caught up in abstract and concrete issues of 'Mémoire, Histoire, Religion'.[508] Here Benaïssa highlights the multidirectional and malleable nature of the text, going so far as to suggest that the play might just as well be *mise en scène* in Algeria, 'entre un émigré et un type du pays'.[509] It is difficult to know in whom these figures would find their equivalent within the context of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, but perhaps this is precisely the point. After all, as the opening notes demonstrate, the Jewish Israeli and the Arab Israeli/Palestinian mothers and uncles can be played by the same actors in what Aslanov calls 'mirrored symmetry'.[510] If the immigrant (*pied-noir*?) is the equivalent of the Israeli, and the native Algerian the equivalent of the Palestinian, Jewish claims to origins and return to the homeland (such as those held by Chouraqui) are called into question.

[507] *Ibid*., p. 114.
[508] *Ibid*., p. 114.
[509] *Ibid*., p. 114.
[510] Aslanov, 'Slimane Benaïssa, or the Voice of Dissidence', p. 78.

It is worth returning to Benaïssa's Berber heritage here, specifically in relation to Jewish and Palestinian identities. Benrabah writes of how the Berber community have been subject to various forms of imperial rule over the centuries: '[t]he Berbers, the indigenous populations, came under the yoke of the Phoenicians (860 BCE), the Romans (second century BCE), the Vandals (429 CE), the Romanized Byzantines (533 CE), the Arabs (647/648 CE), the Spanish (1505), the Turks (1529) and the French (1830)'.[511] In writing of 'les liens qui unissaient les Juifs et les Berbères' (including 'langage commun' and 'cohabitation séculaire'), Chouraqui draws particular attention to mutual resistance against imperial rule: first 'à l'envahisseur romain', and then 'contre les Arabes'.[512] As Colette Zytnicki notes, 'diverse elements – popular legends as well as Biblical and Talmudic texts – handed down among all the ethnic groups in North Africa led to the linkage of the history of both the Jews of North Africa and the Berbers to the far-off'.[513]

In *Les Juifs d'Algérie: deux milles ans d'histoire* (1982), Richard Ayoun and Bernard Cohen dedicate a subsection to the question of "Judéo-Berbères ou Juifs berbérisés?", which

[511] Benrabah, 'Language Maintenance and Spread', p. 197.
[512] André Chouraqui, *La Saga des juifs en Afrique du Nord* (Paris: Hachette, 1972), pp. 52, 63-64.
[513] Colette Zytnicki, 'The "Oriental Jews" of the Maghreb: Reinventing the North African Jewish Past in the Colonial Era', in *Colonialism and the Jews*, pp. 29-53 (p. 40). See also p. 39.

expores '[l]es légendes faisant des Berbères les descendants de peuples palestiniens' that have been propagated over the centuries by historians, Jewish thinkers, Arab scholars, and Christian clerics alike.[514] At one point in Jewish scholarship, Berbers were believed to be among the Canaanites fleeing the 'Promised Land' at the time of Joshua's conquest. This theory was taken up by Christian clerics and drew from the Byzantine historian Procopius, according to whom the Phoenicians who escaped Joshua's conquest immigrated to Africa.[515] By contrast, some Arab scholars claimed a Berber connection to the Jewish imperial Himyarite Kingdom, while others maintained that the Berbers were linked to Goliath and therefore of Philistine (Palestinian) ancestry.[516] If the latter claim, however mythical, were to be applied to *L'Avenir oublié*, Benaïssa would be the Palestinian (Philistine) in opposition to Chouraqui, the Israeli (Israelite).

[514] Richard Ayoun and Bernard Cohen, *Les Juifs d'Algérie: deux milles ans d'histoire* (Paris: Jean-Claude Lattès, 1982), pp. 40-55 (p. 40). See also Gabriel Camps, *Aux marges de l'Histoire* (Paris: Hespérides, 1980), pp. 19-34. For Chouraqui's analysis of this, see Chouraqui, *Between East and West*, pp. 3-5; Chouraqui, *Marche vers l'occident: Les Juifs d'Afrique du Nord*, pp. 13-15, 20; André Chouraqui, 'Expansion du judaïsme parmi les Berbères', in *La Saga des juifs en Afrique du Nord* (Paris: Hachette, 1972), pp. 52-54; André Chouraqui, *Histoires des Juifs en Afrique du Nord: En exil au Maghreb* (Monaco: Rocher, 1998), pp. 49-50.

[515] Ayoun and Cohen, *Les Juifs d'Algérie*, p. 41.

[516] See Ayoun and Cohen, *Les Juifs d 'Algérie*, p. 41.

Spectre of Shoah and Return of Aliyah: the Need for Survival

The first act of *L'Avenir oublié* explores the question of 'aliyah' and the legacy of the Shoah in relation to the nation-state of Israel. Immigration or 'return' to this land was made more urgent for many Jews by the Shoah, and defending its disputable borders and ultimately its legitimacy as a Jewish stage is integral to the predominant Israeli narrative of survival. In *L'Avenir oublié*, the conversation between the Jewish Israeli mother Josette and her son Joseph begins with the topic of war and terrorism, following Joseph's escape from a bomb attack in Jerusalem. According to Josette, '[l]a guerre avec les Arabes est une calamité qui s'est abattue sur nous rapidement, mais qui met bien du temps à s'arrêter' (*AO*, p. 7). The use of the passive voice takes away any responsibility from Israel and suggests that the war was something which happened to the Israeli 'nous' (presumably by Arabs, the implied 'eux'). Josette distinguishes between war (depicted as senseless but understood as necessary for survival) and terrorism (depicted as sheer madness or folly): '[l]a guerre c'est déjà insensé. Mais le terrorisme, c'est de la folie' (*AO*, p. 8). Her son Joseph echoes the language of war as self-defence, but not without irony:

> je n'étais pas venu à la vie… mais à la guerre. C'était le deuxième jour de la guerre des six jours. Mon père était sur le front de l'autre côté de la colline. Il n'est jamais revenu. Mort en défendant la porte de Sion. J'ai été circoncis le jour de la victoire (*AO*, p. 10).

Even when speaking of victory there is a sense of bitterness, as though Joseph is sarcastically regurgitating the discourse of the time, drawing attention to the gate of Zion as a way of monitoring and keeping certain people out, as well as welcoming certain people in. Joseph's birth is marked by death, and his initiation into the Jewish community is interwoven with Israeli nation-building. Although he speaks of defending Zion in the Six-Day War, Joseph rationalises his reluctance to join the army '[p]arce que j'estime que je suis là pour défendre, pas pour occuper' (*AO*, p. 10). His mother's response is telling: 'Mais les territoires, c'est le grand Israël! Et ton père, mort pour ce grand Israël, qu'est-ce que tu en fais?' (*AO*, p. 10). There is a sense of generational responsibility placed on Joseph, which he shirks off and interprets as ideological manipulation and emotional blackmail.

Josette goes on to link the need for self-defence to the desperate nature of persecution: '[s]i nous avons été tellement persécutés dans le passé, c'est parce que nous n'avons jamais eu notre armée à nous. Aujourd'hui, Dieu

merci, nous savons nous défendre' (*AO*, p. 11). According to Roberts, Jewish Israelis' 'memory of persecution' feeds 'an ongoing fear that their mortal enemies would once again try to destroy them', which is in turn linked to 'a certainty that their state must do all in its power to ensure their future security'.[517] The connection the Jewish mother makes between Israel and the legacy of the Shoah is the need for a land where Jews are free from persecution and where they have an army with which to defend themselves. For her, it is not peace that is promised but the land: '[q]ui n'aurait pas voulu, après la Shoah, poser sa valise en Terre Promise et vivre la paix? La terre est à nous, pas la paix' (*AO*, p. 12). Moreover, she emphasises the importance of memory for survival in Israel:

> [l]'oubli est une maladie des gens qui vivent en paix. La tranquillité fait perdre le fil de la mémoire. L'insouciance fait qu'on oublie. Mais nous, réveillés tous les matins par la guerre, comment pourrait-on oublier que nous sommes des victimes potentielles ? Il faut lui rebâtir la mémoire pour sa survie (*AO*, p. 16).

Here, forgetfulness is presented as idealistic and even unhealthy, while memory of the Shoah alongside the everyday reality of war in Israel is depicted as essential for sustaining a

[517] Roberts, *Contested Land, Contested Memory*, p. 106.

survival mentality for Jews living there, who must always bear in mind that they are 'victimes potentielles'.

By contrast, Josette's brother Isac attempts to rationalise Joseph's apparent inability or reluctance to remember and his 'drowning of sorrows' as a result of having 'la mémoire surchargée': '[a]lors, il oublie pour se libérer l'esprit, pour se soulager... C'est humain' (*AO*, p. 16). For Isac, forgetting might be understood as a coping strategy offering the potential for relief and liberation from the weight of history. Nevertheless, he is not altogether convinced by his nephew's apparent memory loss and proceeds to 'prove' to his sister that 'il n'a pas oublié autant que tu le crois' (*AO*, p. 16). What ensues is a question-and-answer session between uncle and nephew, reminiscent of a history lesson:

> **Isac:** […] (*A Joseph*) Joseph, c'est quoi la deuxième guerre mondiale?
> **Joseph:** C'est Hitler qui a voulu imposer le fascisme au monde.
> **Isac:** Quel était l'idéologie du fascisme?
> **Joseph:** Raciste. Et les Juifs étaient la race à exterminer.
> **Isac:** Combien de Juifs ont été ainsi exterminés?
> **Joseph:** Six millions (*AO*, p. 16).

'Tu vois, il n'a rien oublié de l'essentiel', concludes Isac, in an attempt to reassure his sister (*AO*, p. 16). As Alvin Rosenfeld notes,

'the canonical number "Six Million" has been generally adopted to signify that the Jews, persecuted and slaughtered en masse, were the primary victims of the Holocaust'.[518]

Yet Josette is not satisfied with this seemingly superficial and dispassionate regurgitating of the facts; more than just having head-knowledge, she wants her son to remember viscerally that he has a personal connection to the Shoah: 'il a oublié que son grand-père était parmi les six millions' (*AO*, p. 16). Joseph's response is revealing: 'Je n'ai pas oublié, je sais que j'ai six millions de grands-pères' (*AO*, p. 17). Thus, he extends postmemory from familial connection to a transgenerational and intergenerational affiliation with all those who were lost and who lost family members. Because of this connection to and knowledge of the Shoah, Joseph feels a responsibility to create a better future, not through dwelling on the past but through learning from it. Building sites of memory ('des monuments funéraires') is rejected in favour of himself becoming a living 'monument d'anti-racisme et de dialogue, un monument d'humanité, de tolérance et d'intelligence, un monument exemplaire de beauté et d'espoir au nom de tous les gazés, les brûlés, les déportés du monde, qu'ils soient Juifs ou non' (*AO*, p. 17). After seemingly decentralising the Shoah and dejudaising ethical responsibility, Joseph

[518] Rosenfeld, *The End of the Holocaust*, p. 4.

nevertheless concludes with a reference to religious calling and duty, albeit somewhat denigrated by the subversive twist at the end: '[c]'est cela le destin du peuple juif, parce qu'il est le peuple de l'Alliance. Et l'Alliance, c'est la paix. Alors, foutez-moi la paix!' (*AO*, p. 17).[519]

While Joseph universalises the lessons of the Shoah and acknowledges other victims of anti-racism and trauma, Josette perceives the Jews as the ultimate victims of the Shoah and subsequently as potential victims of future attempts at annihilation, as exemplified by threats to destroy the Jewish state. This could be seen as an illustration of Dirk Moses' claim that the 'effects' of 'previous trauma [...] are transmitted through the generations in stories of suffering that convince them that they are actually victims, or potential victims, vulnerable to the same fate as their ancestors'.[520] The language of victimhood and survival reveals the mother's outlook, which is shaped by her personal experience as a Shoah survivor living in war-torn Israel where, according to Levy and Sznaider, the Shoah 'became a symbol for existential fears

[519] Here, he is referring to the passage in Ezekiel, which is significantly about breathing life into dry bones: 'Je traiterai avec eux [les Juifs] une alliance de paix' (Ézéchiel 37:26, *Louis Segond*). See also Ézéchiel 34:25; and Ésaïe 54:10, which speaks of 'collines' as well as '[l']alliance de la paix'. Chouraqui's translation of the Bible uses the term 'pacte' as opposed to 'alliance'. André Chouraqui, *La Bible: Yeḥézqèl* (Paris: Desclée De Brouwer, 1974), pp. 142, 155; and André Chouraqui, *La Bible: Yesha'yah* (Paris: Desclée De Brouwer, 1974), p. 191.

[520] Moses and Rothberg, 'A Dialogue on the Ethics and Politics of Transcultural Memory', p. 35.

and the necessity to construct and maintain a strong military state' following the Six-Day War.[521] There is no indication here that Israelis could be perpetrators; for the Jewish mother, Israelis remain potential victims, and memory of the Shoah forms part of a survival instinct. These notions of 'hereditary victimhood' and 'inherited fear' can be linked to the perceived threat of a 'second holocaust', as explored in Zenatti's *En retard pour la guerre*.[522] The idea of being a potential victim and of being woken up by war every morning suggests a permanent state of war with the potential threat of a 'second holocaust', thus explaining, if not justifying, action taken by the IDF. According to Roberts, '[f]ixing the Holocaust as a founding myth of the state established Israel's sense of itself as a perpetual victim facing a permanently hostile world. From that fearful place, the grim lessons of the past could too easily be projected eternally into the future'.[523]

For Josette's son in *L'Avenir oublié*, it is more complicated; he is not as easily convinced as Moses' theory would suggest. Indeed, Moses gives no agency to the younger generation, suggesting they are passive absorbers of transmitted narratives. In speaking of occupation as opposed to defence,

[521] Levy and Sznaider, 'Memory Unbound', p. 96.
[522] See Bauman, 'Hereditary Victimhood'; Lim, 'Victimhood Nationalism in Contested Memories'; and Yaoz, 'Inherited Fear'.
[523] Roberts, *Contested Land, Contested Memory*, pp. 104-5.

Joseph acknowledges that Israelis are 'implicated subjects' at least (if not perpetrators of systematic violence), in that they are potentially 'participants in and beneficiaries of a system that generates dispersed and uneven experiences of trauma and well-being simultaneously'.[524] The issue of occupation is picked up by Josette's two brothers: Yahou, an orthodox Israeli Jew; and Isac, a French Jew who is reluctant to make 'aliyah' due to reservations over Israeli state policy, not least of all regarding the occupation. Yahou distinguishes himself from his brother: 'Toi, tu dis être un sioniste qui doute; moi, je me dis un Juif sûr, et qui espère' (*AO*, p. 18). Presumably, for Yahou, to be 'un Juif sûr' implies being a Zionist with religious expectation: 'Je suis sûr que cette terre est mienne, [...] je suis sûr que le Messie viendra' (*AO*, p. 18). In response to Yahou's possessive claim to the land, Isac voices his concern: 'Ce qui me gène, c'est que la légitimité des Juifs à retrouver la Terre Promise s'oppose à la légitimité de ceux qui l'habitent depuis toujours' (*AO*, p. 18). The concept of 'aliyah', inherently Biblical, is a given, even for Isac who, although hesitant, implies he will one day 'come back' to this land: 'Je ne suis pas prêt à revenir ici' (*AO*, p. 14).

[524] Rothberg, 'Michael Rothberg discussing "Multidirectional Memory and the Implicated Subject"'.

Indeed, in the conversation with his brother, Isac does not dispute the legitimacy of the Jew's right to statehood, even using the religious language of return to the so-called 'promised land'.[525] However, in contrast to Yahou, he argues for equal legitimacy for Palestinians to self-determination or at least to remain in the land. Yahou's controversial response to Isac's reservation is that Israel has the right to occupy, due to its ancient history: '[l]'occupation pour nous est légitime, fondée sur le droit du plus ancien occupant légitime' (*AO*, p. 18). Yahou is referring to what is known as the Abrahamic covenant recorded in the Hebrew Torah (notably Genesis 15), according to which God promised the land of Canaan to Abraham, and which led to the Israelite conquest of Canaan in around 1900BCE. This land was subsequently occupied by numerous imperial powers including the Babylonians, the Greeks, the Romans, and the Ottomans. Following Ottoman rule, the so-called 'Holy Land' was split up, along with surrounding Arab countries, by the diminishing colonial powers of France and Great Britain (notably in the Sykes-Picot agreement), and occupied by the British during the mandate period before Israel proclaimed independence in 1948. This in turn led to the Nakba (Arabic for 'catastrophe', referring to the expulsion and flight of Palestinians), hence Isac's response

[525] See, for example, Joshua 21:43.

to his brother's defence: '[l]e peuple juif doit revenir à sa terre avec un esprit de partage, pas avec un esprit d'exclusion' (*AO*, p. 18).

While Isac does not dispute Yahou's claim that the land belongs to the Jewish people ('sa terre'), he nevertheless advocates sharing the land with those living there, perhaps adopting the logic that if the land was promised to Abraham, was it not destined to be shared by his two sons and their descendants, both Jewish (from Isaac's line) and Arab (from Ishmael's line)? In secular humanist terms, Said writes:

> [t]here can be no reconciliation unless both peoples, two communities of suffering, resolve that their existence is a secular fact, and that it has to be dealt with as such. [...] We must now begin to think in terms of coexistence, after separation, in spite of partition.[526]

Yahou, however, would rather see Jews and Arab Palestinians as separate categories, whereby Jews are victims and Palestinians are perpetrators: 'comment veux-tu partager avec un ennemi qui ne chercherait qu'à t'exterminer s'il avait le pouvoir? C'est écrit dans leur charte' (*AO*, p. 18). The charter referred to here is the Hamas Charter (also

[526] Edward Said, 'The One-State Solution', *The New York Times Magazine*, 10 January 1999, <https://www.nytimes.com/1999/01/10/magazine/the-one-state-solution.html> [accessed 19 April 2018] (para 18 of 29).

known as the Hamas Covenant) of the Islamic Resistance Movement in Palestine,[527] which is supposedly representative of the Palestinian people in Yahou's view, as implied by the plural possessive pronoun. Thus the Palestinian people are designated as the 'enemy' and reduced to Hamas, whether construed as an anti-colonial resistance movement or designated a terrorist organisation, as it is by Israel, the European Union, and the United States. In invoking victim and enemy categories, Yahou falls into the trap of adopting similar language to that used in the Hamas Charter, which portrays Palestinians as victims and Zionists or Jews (conflated categories) as perpetrators. Framing their narrative as one of occupation and resistance pits the Palestinians as either victims of what is portrayed as a fascist Israeli government (neo-Nazis at worst) or *résistants* who are part of an anti-(neo)colonial struggle against occupation of the West Bank (by the IDF and Israeli settlers). Just as Yahou effectively labels all Palestinians terrorists by association with Hamas, the Charter makes an amalgamation between 'Israel, Judaism and Jews' and what it terms 'Zionist invaders':

[527] 'Hamas Covenant 1988: The Covenant of the Islamic Resistance Movement', *Lillian Goldman Law Library* (2008), <http://avalon.law.yale.edu/20th_century/hamas.asp> [accessed 1 February 2016]. Hamas leader Khaled Masal issued a new charter in May 2017. See Middle East Eye Staff, 'Hamas in 2017: The Document in Full', *Middle East Eye*, 1 May 2017, <http://www.middleeasteye.net/news/hamas-charter-1637794876> [accessed 28 April 2018].

'[o]ur struggle against the Jews is very great and very serious'.[528] Moreover, in the Hamas Charter, the Islamic Resistance Movement in Palestine repeatedly equates Zionism with Nazism (the fascist ideology which convinced socialist Zionists that a safe haven for the Jews needed to be established): '[t]here is no way out except by concentrating all powers and energies to face this Nazi, vicious […] invasion'; '[t]he Zionist Nazi activities against our people will not last for long'.[529] This is an example of what Rothberg terms 'memory wars', which claim equation and symmetry rather than differentiating between past and present catastrophes and structural violence.[530] Rothberg cautions against 'competitive memory', which falsely equates 'Nazi persecution of European Jews' with 'Israeli oppression of Palestinians' in his article 'From Gaza to Warsaw: Mapping Multidirectional Memory'.[531] According to Rothberg, 'the mix of equation and competition concatenates desire and envy into a resistance politics rife with the potential for *ressentiment*'.[532] Moreover, Rothberg notes how Said 'repeatedly refused "morally to equate mass extermination with mass dispossession"', the very opposite of what is set out in the Hamas Charter.[533]

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[528] *Ibid*.
[529] *Ibid*.
[530] Rothberg, 'From Gaza to Warsaw', p. 523.
[531] *Ibid*., pp. 523, 530.
[532] *Ibid*., pp. 535-36.
[533] *Ibid*., p. 540. Here Rothberg is quoting from Said's 'Bases for Coexistence', p. 208.

Nakba and Al-Awda: the Catastrophe of (Internal) Exile

In *Contested Land, Contested Memory*, Roberts writes that '[t]wo devastating events, the Holocaust and the Nakba, marked Israel's founding, and how each has been remembered and forgotten has infused both the political and the physical landscape of the country'.[534] She notes that the Hebrew word *Shoah* and the Arabic word *Nakba* both translate into English as 'Catastrophe' (as they do in French) and, while careful not to equate the two, concludes that '[b]oth Israelis and Palestinians understand their national identities through the collective memory of a traumatic past'.[535] This echoes the words of Said in his essay on coexistence:

> there is a link to be made between what happened to Jews in World War Two and the catastrophe of the Palestinian people, but it cannot be made only rhetorically, or as an argument to demolish or diminish the true content both of the Holocaust and of 1948. Neither is equal to the other; similarly neither one nor the other excuses present violence; and finally, neither one nor the other must be minimized.[536]

[534] Roberts, *Contested Land, Contested Memory*, p. 21.
[535] *Ibid*., p. 64. In her introduction, Roberts writes: 'I do not parallel the Nakba with the Holocaust. It is not logically possible to equate the uprooting of over seven hundred thousand people with the meticulously planned genocide of six million'. *Ibid*., p. 21.
[536] Said, 'Bases for Coexistence', p. 207.

Auron writes in *Israeli Identities: Jews and Arabs Facing the Self and the Other*, that '[w]hile emphasizing the fundamental difference between the Shoah and the Nakba, it is nonetheless important to remember that great sense of victimization plays a major role in both Arab Israeli and Jewish Israeli society'.[537] He goes on to write that 'this sense of victimization constitutes an important component of the identity of both Palestinians (living inside and outside the state of Israel) and Israeli and non-Israeli Jews'.[538] Thus memory, again, is shown to be an important component of identity formation. While the first act of *L'Avenir oublié* focuses on the tragedy of the Shoah and the need for national security, the second act explores Palestinian expulsion and the need for resistance, whether armed or peaceful, from without or within. By presenting various Palestinian narratives, the second act challenges the idea that 'all Palestinians are terrorists', as they are perceived to be by Yahou.

The beginning of the first act already hints at what is to emerge in the Arab Israeli family's dialogue in the second act. As Antoine-Nasser and Joseph work on digging a well in the play's opening scene, an offstage voice calls to the former in Arabic, addressing him as Nasser. He subsequently translates for his friend Joseph (and the audience): '[i]ls

[537] Auron, *Israeli Identities*, p. 134.
[538] *Ibid*., p. 135.

sont en train de démolir la maison de mon oncle Brahim!' (*AO*, p. 7). The play then shifts to the Jewish Israeli family before (re)turning to the Arab Israeli family's plight. Jeff Halper argues that Israel's 'house demolition policy represents the essence of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict: denying the Palestinian people the right to remain in the Land of Israel, either as a national collective or as individuals'.[539] He refers to the directives of the Gafni Commission in 1973 to maintain a 70% Jewish majority in Jerusalem.[540] Irus Braverma argues that 'the illegal building carried out by East Jerusalemite Palestinians' – that is those designated 'Israeli Arabs' – can be seen as 'an act of spatial protest',[541] Brahim providing a fictional example of this in *L'Avenir oublié*. Antoine-Nasser, like his uncle, dreams of one day building his own house, but only '[s]i les Israéliens m'accordent un permis de construire' (*AO*, p. 29), a play on the 'permis de conduire' as a rite of passage into society. However, as a loyal subject of the Israeli state, he is not prepared to commit the illegal act of building a house as a form of resistance only for it to be destroyed.

[539] Jeff Halper, 'The Policy of House Demolitions in East Jerusalem: What It Is, How It Is Done and to What End', *Palestine-Israel Journal of Politics, Economics & Culture*, 17 (2011), 74-82 (p. 75).
[540] *Ibid*.
[541] Irus Braverma, 'Powers of Illegality: House Demolition', *Law & Social Inquiry*, 32 (2007), 333-72 (p. 333).

According to Israeli urban policy, Israeli Arabs, many of whom self-identify as Palestinians with Israeli passports, have (revocable) permanent residency, and in much of East Jerusalem are prohibited from building houses, including on land that they own, as much of the land has been designated as '"open green space" [...],"reserved" for future urban development'.[542] Braverma argues that '[s]ince any form of building is prohibited in these spaces (even when private ownership is not contested), the declaration of green zones is an effective device for preventing Palestinian development in the place'.[543] Hence Brahim's contension, '[j]'ai construit ma maison de mes mains, pierre par pierre. Ils l'ont détruite au nom de la loi. De quelle loi? La terre est ma terre' (*AO*, p. 27). For Brahim, the problem is not so much that Jews have come to live on this land – indeed he believes that this is in fulfilment of a promise Allah made in the Quran – but rather the way in which they deny many Palestinians the right to live there in houses built with their own hands:

> Que les Juifs viennent sur leur terre promise par Dieu et au nom de Dieu, je suis d'accord. Mais alors, qu'ils appliquent les lois que Dieu a

[542] See 'FAQ's – Home Demolitions', *The Israeli Committee Against House Demolitions*, 2016, <http://icahd.org/faqs-home-demolitions/> [accessed 9 September 2016].

[543] For more on this, see Braverma, 'Powers of Illegality', p. 340.

> données à Moïse. On n'occupe pas une terre au nom de Dieu, pour ensuite voter des lois au nom de la politique (*AO*, p. 33).

Here, Brahim is referring both to the Qur'an and the Torah, religious texts which Chouraqui translated into French. According to the Qur'an, Allah declared to the prophet Muhammad: 'Il [Pharaon] a voulu les déraciner du pays,/ mais nous l'avons englouti, avec tous les siens./ *Nous avons dit ensuite, aux Fils d'Isrâ'îl: « Habitez cette terre! /* Quand l'Autre promesse se réalisera,/ *nous vous ferons revenir en foule* »'.[544] These words echo prophecies in the Torah and Tanakh, but it is not to these passages that Brahim is referring in evoking the Law of Moses; rather he is making reference to the law according to which non-Jews or 'étrangers' in the land are to be treated as 'native-born', treated with love and respect, especially considering Jews themselves were foreigners under Pharaoh in Egypt.[545]

Fatima contextualises Brahim's reference to contemporary state policy and understands permanent residency as a kind of pilgrim status:

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[544] Surah 17, Ayaat 101, 103-4. André Chouraqui, *Le Coran: L'Appel* (Paris: Robert Laffont, 1990), pp. 571, emphasis mine. See also Surah 5, Ayaat 20-21: 'Mûssa dit à son peuple: « *Ô mon peuple,/ […] entrez en Terre du Sanctuaire, inscrite pour vous par Allah,*/ ne revenez plus sur vos pas […] »'. Chouraqui, *Le Coran: L'Appel*, p. 222, emphasis mine.

[545] See Exodus 22:21, 23:9; Leviticus 19:33-34; Deuteronomy 10:18-19.

> Ils ont démoli la maison de mon frère parce qu'il n'avait pas de permis de construire. J'ai toujours pensé que notre seul tort est d'habiter la terre des prophètes: on nous confond avec les pèlerins. Personne ne croit que nous sommes là depuis toujours et pour toujours. Alors, on nous dit de rentrer chez nous, que la visite est terminée… Mais chez nous, c'est où en dehors d'ici? (*AO*, p. 28).

The term 'resident' has a sense of long-term but nevertheless finite dwelling, while 'pilgrim' connotes visiting or passing through on the way to an object of pilgrimage. Rejecting both these terms, Fatima affirms Palestinian presence and right to remain in the land ('chez nous') pre- and post-Israeli independence: 'nous sommes là depuis toujours et pour toujours' (*AO*, p. 28). The subject of conversation then shifts from current state policy regarding the land to memory of expulsion and return, albeit to a land reconfigured. The mother recalls how her mother 'm'a jeté au monde en 1947', during the 1947-48 Civil War in British Mandate Palestine, and how, '[e]n la tétant, je voyais dans ses yeux le chemin de l'exil et j'entendais dans son ventre le bruit de ses pas' (*AO,* p. 28). This is similar to Antoine-Nasser's purported experience and trauma of the Six-Day War which he claims to have witnessed from his mother's womb. Fatima tells of how she married a Christian in a

refugee camp – '[d]ans les camps, Chrétiens et Musulmans, nous avions tous comme seule religion la misère et l'exil' – and how her husband died in the Six-Day War, 'me laissant enceinte de Antoine-Nasser' (*AO*, pp. 28-29, 31). Exile and refugee camps are key components of the painful narrative of the Nakba, which refers specifically to 'the uprooting of over seven hundred thousand [Palestinian] people', alongside 'the humiliation of violent expulsion and the loss of their homes, their land, and their society'.[546] In his essay 'Reflections on Exile', Said writes of how 'Palestinians feel that they have been turned into exiles by the proverbial people of exile, the Jews'.[547] Moreover, the expulsion is linked to the sorely-felt exclusion of Palestinians from Israeli land and politics, which persists to this day. In the words of Antoine-Nasser's uncle, Abou-Daoud, the Palestinians are 'le peuple injustement exclu de sa terre, des décisions et de sa propre parole' (*AO*, p. 35).

Antoine-Nasser further changes the course of the conversation, with its focus on Palestinian expulsion and the seemingly unrealisable dream of building a house in

[546] Roberts, *Contested Land, Contested Memory*, p. 21.
[547] Edward Said, 'Reflections on Exile', in *Reflections on Exile and Other Literary and Cultural Essays*, pp. 173-86 (p. 178) (first publ. in *Granta*, 13 (Winter 1984)). In 'Nationalism, Human Rights, and Interpretation', Said puts forward the same argument more vehemently: '[t]he elevation of a new people to sovereignty in the Holy Land has meant the subjugation, dispossession, and oppression of another'. Said, 'Nationalism, Human Rights, and Interpretation', p. 433.

Jerusalem as an Arab Israeli, to the controversial topic of considering joining the army. 'Je me suis engagé dans l'armée israélienne', he declares, much to his mother and uncle's dismay (*AO*, p. 30). As previously noted, Antoine-Nasser claims to have signed up on the pretence that he is a Bedouin (*AO*, p. 30). Shipler states that Arabs are 'unwelcome' in the Israeli army, 'because of official uneasiness about their loyalties', and that most of them do not want to join anyway due to 'their aversion to fighting for Israel against their kinsmen from Arab countries'.[548] He goes on to write that '[p]ractically the only non-Jews accepted into the army are Bedouins and Druse, two peoples that have become adept at deferring to the dominant group in whatever part of the Middle East they happen to be'.[549] According to the Jewish Virtual Library, '[t]he sole legal distinction between Jewish and Arab citizens of Israel is that the latter are not *required* to serve in the Israeli army', in order to 'spare Arab citizens the need to take up arms against their brethren'.[550] Following this logic, Fatima sees joining the Israeli army as betrayal:

> [o]n nous a chassés de nos villages, on nous a exilés dans des camps où

[548] Shipler, *Arab and Jew* (2015), p. 541.
[549] *Ibid*.
[550] Mitchell Bard, 'Israeli Arabs: Status of Arabs in Israel', *Jewish Virtual Library*, 2016, <http://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/jsource/Society_&_Culture/arabstat.html> [accessed 8 September 2016].

> sont morts tes grands-parents. Nous avons connu avec les Juifs toutes sortes de répressions. Tu ne peux pas te mettre au garde-à-vous dans leurs rangs sans que je me sente déshonorée. C'est injuste, c'est de la trahison (*AO*, p. 30).

Although these are not equated, there is a striking parallel here between Joseph's grandfather dying in a concentration camp, and Antoine-Nasser's grandparents dying in a refugee camp, both forming a kind of unsettling, traumatic postmemory which shapes decision-making in the present.

According to Josette, deserting the Israeli army would dishonour the memory of stateless Shoah victims and survivors. According to Fatima, if Antoine-Nasser were to join the IDF he would be a traitor and a cause of dishonour on several levels, not least of all on a familial one. Indeed, when Antoine-Nasser presses his mother to specify who exactly he would be betraying, her response is telling: '[t]a religion, ta race, tes origines, tes oncles, tes frères… Moi, je me sens trahie dans mes entrailles!' (*AO*, p. 30). The Jews (note the conflation with Jewish Israelis) are designated as 'enemies', associated with expulsion and suppression, thus joining their ranks would be a further degradation. Fatima's brother Brahim elaborates on the religious aspect: 'du point de vue de l'islam […] [c']est interdit. Les armées et les écritures doivent être à jamais séparées'

(*AO*, p. 30). Antoine-Nasser's response reveals how the army is a rite of passage into Israeli society, with financial benefits: '[c]e qui est interdit, c'est d'être en déficit de droits. Si tu ne fais pas l'armée, tu n'es rien. Tu seras un habitant sans droits. Si tu fais l'armée, tu deviens citoyen avec tous les droits' (*AO*, p. 30). As Shipler notes,

> the Israeli army [...] has become something akin to the country itself, a noble institution of national commitment whose universal membership and lifetime ties signify a pervasive joining of the national purpose [...], for the army is a gathering of the community, and anyone left outside remains something of an outsider in his civilian life as well.[551]

Subsequently, '[m]any Israeli Arabs argue that they should not be relegated to inferior status for failing to do military service'.[552] Thus Antoine-Nasser expresses a desire to be accepted as a member of the national community by joining the army.

Fatima, meanwhile, puts more emphasis on the betrayal of the family in its broadest sense, extended to the Arab people as a whole: '[m]ais réfléchis. En face, dans les armées

[551] Shipler, *Arab and Jew* (2015), p. 541. See 'Life After the Army', *Nefesh B'Nefesh*, 2016, <http://www.nbn.org.il/aliyahpedia/army-national-service/idf-sherut-leumi/life-after-the-army/> [accessed 12 September 2016].
[552] Shipler, *Arab and Jew* (2015), p. 542.

arabes, il y a tes cousins, tes oncles, ta famille. Tu ne vas pas faire couler le sang de ta famille?!' (*AO*, p. 30). Here, the sardonic response which Antoine-Nasser gives is a highly controversial one: '[c]ette famille a déjà fait couler notre sang en nous abandonnant seuls face aux Israéliens' (*AO*, p. 31). This idea that the Palestinians were abandoned, if not betrayed by their Arab neighbours – particularly in 1948 but also during the Six-Day War in 1967 – is elaborated upon in the dialogue between Brahim and his brother Abou-Daoud. In response to Abou-Daoud's allegation that Brahim is a traitor for having opted for Israeli nationality and for living 'chez l'ennemi' (something which will be explored in the chapter on Khadra's *L'Attentat*), Brahim challenges his brother: 'vous qui êtes partis, vous nous accuseriez de traîtrise?' (*AO*, p. 33). Although the mother's voice is often repressed by her brothers, she has the last word in this scene, before being silenced:

> Les armées arabes nous ont promis de nous libérer. Chaque fois qu'ils ont perdu une guerre, ils nous ont accusés de trahison… Tu trouves cela juste? Nous n'avons connu ni l'indulgence des Arabes ni la générosité des Juifs. Nous sommes responsables de nous-mêmes dans un monde d'irresponsables. *(Elle sort, renvoyée par Brahim)* (AO, p. 34).

Brahim gives a specific example of this generalised statement in a later scene, when the topic of conversation between him and his brother turns to the Six-Day War: 'On a chanté la victoire pendant six jours pour apprendre à la dernière minute la défaite… […] La Nation déshonorée! En six jours' (*AO*, p. 35). He concludes:

> La Guerre des Six Jours n'est pas une victoire d'Israël sur les Arabes, elle est une victoire du mensonge chez les Arabes… Alors, quand je dis que je suis Arabe israélien, en tant qu'Arabe, je pense que je ne suis pas israélien. Mais en tant qu'Israélien, je dis vrai: je suis arabe (*AO*, p. 35).

This brings their conversation back to the question of (Arab) Israeli citizenship, which Abou-Daoud sees as a form of (an)nihilation in its denial of Palestinian identity: 'La nationalité israélienne est un choix que je n'accepterai jamais; quelles que soient les circonstances, je ne peux reconnaître ma mort' (*AO*, p. 33). As Shipler notes, when East Jerusalem was annexed by Israel in 1967, although Palestinians were offered Israeli citizenship, most chose to retain their Jordanian citizenship.[553] For Brahim, '[m]a nationalité porte simplement le nom de mon pays... Mon pays aujourd'hui s'appelle Israël' (*AO*, p. 33). As Roberts writes, 'territorial boundaries may shift, but the shared sense of a

[553] *Ibid*., p. 17.

common history can bind disparate groupings of people in a national community'.[554] Brahim differentiates between the land (*terre*) which he believes is his as a Palestinian, and the country (*pays*) of which he is an Israeli citizen: '[m]oi, j'ai choisi de rester sur ma terre, même si elle est occupée' (*AO*, p. 33). For Abou-Daoud, land cannot be one's own if one is unable to build upon it, on legal grounds, or defend it, on moral grounds:

> Quand tu ne peux pas bâtir ta maison sur la terre où tu vis – sinon elle est détruite – alors, ce n'est plus ta terre. Une terre se défend… et tu ne peux la défendre parce que tu habites chez l'ennemi (AO, p. 33).

By Said's definition, exile is 'the unhealable rift forced between a human being and a native place, between the self and its true home'.[555] Even though Brahim feels the land where he lives is his 'true home', the fact that he cannot build his own house on it reveals an internal exile that he is unwilling to acknowledge. Instead, he responds to Abou-Daoud that '[j]e n'habite pas, je cohabite. Et d'abord, ce n'est pas moi qui habite chez l'ennemi… mais l'ennemi qui habite chez moi' (*AO*, p. 33). At first, his reference to cohabitation suggests the potential for *vivre ensemble*, but with his insistence on 'chez moi', he comes back to the age-old question

[554] Roberts, *Contested Land, Contested Memory*, 62.
[555] Said, 'Reflections on Exile', p. 173.

already discussed by his Jewish counterparts in the first act: who was here first? Moreover, he maintains the 'enemy' myth, that is the idea that 'une haine héréditaire […] [existe] entre Arabes et juifs [...] [qui] empêcherait à jamais toute réconciliation',[556] a myth at once expounded and confounded by the concept of the Abrahamic.

Beyond the Semite: a Return to the Abrahamic?

To return to the opening discussion over the suitability of the terms '*pied-noir* Jew' and 'Arab-Jew' or 'Juif-Arabe', it would appear that the former designation, whether used as a label or political statement, is in direct opposition to the equally charged latter claim. Incidentally, self-identifying 'Arab-Jews' do not represent the Mizrahi population as a whole, which tends to vote right-wing in Israel,[557] in a similar way to how *pieds-noirs* tend to vote right-wing in France.[558] Indeed, Yoav Peled writes of 'the anti-Arab sentiments of Oriental Jews and their

[556] Chouraqui, *Ce que je crois*, p. 276.
[557] See Yoav Peled, 'Ethnic Exclusionism in the Periphery: The Case of Oriental Jews in Israel's Development Towns', *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, 13 (1990), 345-67; and Joyce Dalsheim, 'Twice Removed: Mizrahi Settlers in Gush Katif', *Social Identities*, 14 (2008), 535-51.
[558] See John Veugelers, Gabriel Menard, and Pierre Permingeat, 'Colonial Past, Voluntary Association and Far-Right Voting in France', *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, 38 (2015), 775-91.

proclivity for right-wing politics'.[559] Moreover, Joyce Dalsheim points out that, although the settler stereotype is 'radical, right-wing, religious fundamentalist, [...] and of Ashkenazi descent', there were (in Gaza) and still are (in the West Bank) a large number of Mizrahi settlers (right-wing and religious, or otherwise).[560] While the '*pied-noir*' designation emphasises French assimilation, the term 'Arab-Jew' suggests acculturation or integration. These approaches to identity (trans)formation put forward by Barry Rubin – assimilation, acculturation, integration – are problematised by Dalila Arezki, who proposes interculturalism as an alternative.[561] According to Arezki, '[l]'interculturel, en somme, désigne cette attitude qui fait que chaque différence culturelle rencontrée, plutôt que d'être une barrière, ouvre à la communication'.[562] Interculturalism thus construed corresponds with Édouard Glissant's rhizomatic 'poétique de la relation', which draws from Giles Deleuze and Félix Guattari: '[l]a pensée du rhizome serait au principe de ce que j'appelle une poétique de la relation, selon laquelle

[559] Peled, 'Ethnic Exclusionism in the Periphery', p. 346.
[560] Dalsheim, 'Twice Removed', p. 547.
[561] Dalila Arezki, *Romancières algériennes francophones: Langue, culture, identité* (Biarritz: Séguier, 2006), p. 16. See Barry M. Rubin, *Assimilation and its Discontents* (New York: Times Books, Random House, 1995).
[562] Arezki, *Romancières algériennes francophones*, p. 18.

toute identité s'étend dans un rapport à l'Autre'.[563]

To link this back to the primary text *Avenir oublié,* a philosophical conversation between Arab Israeli Antoine-Nasser and Jewish Israeli Joseph reveals an Abrahamic link whereby Christians as well as Jews and Arabs (Semites) have the same rhizomatic root. Although both Joseph and Antoine-Nasser are disillusioned by organised and institutional religion, particularly in its fundamentalist manifestations, they nevertheless employ (inter)religious language in their dialogue. Joseph summarises this paradox:

> [n]ous sommes tous juifs de naissance parce que nous venons au monde pour Dieu. Nous sommes tous chrétiens par pénitence parce que nous avons tous des péchés à racheter. Nous sommes tous musulmans par espérance parce que chacun de nous rêve à un paradis caché. Si je suis laïque, c'est parce que je suis fatigué d'être un enfant face à Dieu (*AO*, p. 39).

As Joseph speaks of sin and forgiveness in the context of war, Antoine-Nasser asks, tongue-in-cheek, '[t]'as pas été curé, toi, dans une autre vie?' to which Joseph responds, '[e]t toi, tu n'as pas été juif?' (*AO*, p. 46). 'Dans une

[563] Édouard Glissant, *Poétique de la Relation* (Paris: Gallimard, 1990), p. 23.

autre vie, on a tous été juifs, c'est sûr', concludes Antoine-Nasser (*AO*, p. 46).

In *Lettre à un ami arabe*, Chouraqui recalls the common and enduring local identity of the Jerusalemite: 'toi, tu te savais Homme de Jérusalem, Hyérosolimitain, comme moi-même. Nos compatriotes étaient Hébronites, Naplousiens, Haïfaïtes: l'appartenance consciente se situait au niveau local dans l'authenticité de nos racines'.[564] Here Chouraqui demonstrates how '[t]he sharing of a regional culture [...] create[s] ties that reach out across borders and the potential for transcendent connections that would mitigate [...] conflicts', as Susannah Radstone puts it.[565] This points to the overlap between locatedness and transculturality, advocated by Radstone, who draws our attention to 'the specificities and localities of memory'.[566] Jerusalem itself is a site fraught with what Rothberg terms 'memory wars'[567] and has undergone a palimpsestic process of naming, firstly from Jerusalem (the capital of Judea) to Aelia Capitolina during the Roman Empire. As Chouraqui writes, 'Jérusalem débaptisée devenait Aelia Capitolina tandis que la terre d'Israël prenait soudain le nom de Palestine,

[564] Chouraqui, *Lettre à un ami arabe*, p. 17.
[565] Salhi, 'From Exile in the Theatre to the Theatre in Exile', p. 401.
[566] Susannah Radstone, 'What Place Is This? Transcultural Memory and the Locations of Memory Studies', *Parallax*, 17 (2011), 109-23 (p. 119). See also Susannah Radstone, 'Afterword: Bringing Memory Home: Location, Theory, Hybridity', *Journal of Latin American Cultural Studies*, 21 (2012), 351-57.
[567] Rothberg, *Multidirectional Memory*, p. 20.

« la terre des Philistins »'.[568] Following the Muslim conquest, the city was renamed Al Quds (Arabic) and then re-renamed Jerusalem once the State of Israel was founded, its status changing in 1967 (East/West, occupied/united). The Temple Mount, the holiest place for the Jews on which both their temples were built, is known as Haram Al Sharif by Muslims since the Dome of the Rock and Al Aqsa Mosque were built there, rendering it the third holiest site for Muslims after Mecca and Medina. Significantly, both the Hebrew and Arabic names for this city connote holiness. A Jerusalemite identity at the centre of the 'Holy Land' thus incorporates the religious cultures of Jews, Christians, and Muslims, exemplified in the character of Antoine-Nasser. Already 'half-Christian, half-Muslim' by virtue of his parents, Antoine-Nasser seeks to marry a Jew as his 'other half', to complete his Jerusalemite identity: 'Mon père est chrétien, ma mère musulmane, mes enfants seront juifs. À moi tout seul, je serai Jérusalem! I will be the king of Jérusalem!...' (*AO*, p. 45).

According to Anidjar and Hochberg, Christian theology combined with a Eurocentric Zionism is largely to blame for the division of Jews and Arabs.[569] In line with this, Harrison, drawing from Derrida, defines the 'Abrahamic' as 'the tie that binds Jews

[568] Chouraqui, *Lettre à un ami arabe*, p. 17.
[569] See, in particular, Anidjar, *The Jew, the Arab*, pp. 33-39; and Hochberg, *In Spite of Partition*, p. 7.

and Muslims in spite of colonial/Zionist efforts to separate them'.[570] Anidjar in particular appears to favour a 'Jewish-Muslim symbiosis' over a Judeo-Christian outlook,[571] accusing the latter of orientalising both Jews and Arabs as other from the self and from one another. Hochberg argues that this approach has been adopted by a configuration of Zionism whereby Jews are to be neither 'too Jewish' nor 'too Arab'.[572] While Anidjar fails to engage with Christian Arabs (whether Israeli or Palestinian),[573] either as an abstract concept or a concrete reality, the character of Antoine-Nasser suggests a Christo-Muslim outlook, with its roots in Judaism. Meanwhile, the character of Joseph proposes a different form of Judeo-Christianity to that commonly assumed, whereby the Jew remains a Jew even when adopting so-called 'Christian' theology. In this way, Joseph and Antoine-Nasser can be seen to perform the 'Abrahamic'. Here, Benaïssa appears to be drawing from Chouraqui, who writes in his 1993 preface to *Lettre à un ami arabe*:

> Avec Israël, le monde chrétien et l'Islam ont puisé dans l'héritage abrahamique l'essentiel de leurs

[570] Harrison, *Transcolonial Maghreb*, p. 103.
[571] Anidjar, *The Jew, the Arab*, p. 60.
[572] See Hochberg, 'Too Jewish and Too Arab *or* Who is the (Israeli) Subject?', in *In Spite of Partition*, pp. 94-115.
[573] Hochberg, by contrast, dedicates a chapter to 'Christian-Israeli-Palestinian writer' Anton Shammas. Hochberg, 'Bringing Hebrew Back to Its (Semitic) Place: On the Deterritorialization of Language', in *In Spite of Partition*, pp. 73-93.

> croyances religieuses et de leurs idéaux. Ces hommes, les Juifs, les chrétiens et les musulmans, contribueraient à leur réalisation historique et universelle s'ils réunissaient l'œuvre encore « utopique » d'édification de la paix au Proche-Orient et dans le monde.[574]

Aslanov convincingly argues that this utopia has its roots in nostalgia over *convivencia* in Andalusia and is thus a 'retrospective utopia', which is implied in the title *L'Avenir oublié*, 'where *oublié* is paradoxically used in reference to the time to come'.[575] According to Aslanov, '[t]he common Algerian background that functions as an implicit horizon to Chouraqui and Benaïssa is [...] itself rooted in a deeper layer of representation related to the legacy of Al-Andalus', which manifested itself through liturgy and *Malouf* music in their native Algeria.[576]

In *Prophètes sans dieu*, the Moses character/actor, who starts in the stage directions as 'Moïse' and then becomes 'l'acteur Moïse' in the final scene, declares, 'Moi, j'essaie de comprendre pourquoi, en étant tous les trois fils d'Abraham et en

[574] Chouraqui, *Lettre à un ami arabe*, p. 12.
[575] Aslanov, 'Slimane Benaïssa, or the Voice of Dissidence', p. 76. On *convivencia*, see David Nirenberg, 'What Can Medieval Spain Teach Us about Muslim-Jewish Relations', *CCAR Journal: A Reform Jewish Quarterly* (Spring/Summer 2002), 17-36; and Jonathan Ray, 'Beyond Tolerance and Persecution: Reassessing Our Approach to Medieval Convivencia', *Jewish Social Studies*, 11 (2005), 1-18.
[576] Aslanov, 'Slimane Benaïssa, or the Voice of Dissidence', p. 77.

prêchant les mêmes fondements, les même valeurs et les mêmes croyances, nos "croyants", eux, se font la guerre'.[577] In *The Trace of God: Derrida and Religion* (2014), Anne Norton writes, 'Abraham is not only the father of two brothers [Ishmael and Isaac] and a numberless posterity, he is also the father of three faiths'.[578] She also claims that '[t]hough he returns again and again to the story of the sacrifice of Isaac – though he preserves and relies on these children of Abraham, Isaac, and Ishmael – Derrida does not often refer, directly or indirectly, to the three monotheistic religions called by some the Abrahamic faiths'.[579] Anidjar, for his part, emphasises the coexistence of Abraham (Jewish) and Ibrahim (Muslim) in Derrida's writing, which coincides with the Jew and the Arab. He argues that '"the Jew, the Arab" is [...] the name of the Abrahamic in Derrida'.[580] Harrison further contextualises the Abrahamic as conceptualised by Derrida in light of his personal trajectory: 'it is at the site of entanglement of Derrida's Jewishness and Algerianness, in his double affiliation to Israelis/Jews and Palestinians/Algerians, that we must read the Abrahamic in Derrida'.[581] This double affiliation can also be seen in

[577] Benaïssa, *Prophètes sans Dieu*, p. 10.
[578] Anne Norton, 'Called to Bear Witness: Derrida, Muslims, and Islam', in *The Trace of God: Derrida and Religion*, ed. by Edward Baring and Peter E. Gordon (New York: Fordham University Press), pp. 88-109 (p. 100).
[579] *Ibid*.
[580] Anidjar, *The Jew, the Arab*, p. 40.
[581] Harrison, *Transcolonial Maghreb*, p. 128.

Chouraqui, as an Algerian Jew and self-defining Jerusalemite, with the added religious dimension, as an advocate of interfaith dialogue and translator of the Hebrew Scriptures and the Qur'an into French. In *Lettre à un ami arabe*, Chouraqui writes of Arab-Jewish brotherhood as having its roots in the figure of Abraham: 'La Bible [...] a raison lorsqu'elle situe la source de notre fraternité dans la personne d'Abraham. Juifs et Arabes ont entretenu d'étroites relations spirituelles, intellectuelles, commerciales et sociales, depuis les origines de leur histoire'.[582] He goes on to write that '[c]e qui est incontestable, au-delà du mystère des origines, c'est notre parenté sociologique, linguistique, culturelle et spirituelle, et que nous nous soyons reconnus si constamment dans la personne du patriarche Abraham'.[583]

It is worth turning our attention here to names and naming in considering the Abrahamic, and monotheistic religions in a broader sense, as it relates to *L'Avenir oublié*. The naming of the Arab Muslim uncle Brahim and the Jewish Israeli uncle Isac is significant, as their names derive from those of the Jewish patriarchs and who, according to the Qur'an, along with Ishmael, are 'those whom He [Allah] has sent from above'.[584] This points towards what Chouraqui in *Lettre à un ami arabe* calls 'la symbiose d'Ismaël et d'Israël',

[582] Chouraqui, *Lettre à un ami arabe*, p. 29.
[583] *Ibid*., p. 30.
[584] The Qur'an qtd. in Chouraqui, *Between East and West*, p. 44.

taking into account that Isaac's son Jacob was renamed Israel in the Hebrew Bible.[585] Indeed, both Jews and Arabs (of which Christians and Muslims) claim to be descendants of Abraham, whose name means 'Père de la Multitude'.[586] Although born after Ishmael, Isaac is considered 'the only begotten son' of Abraham in Jewish theology.[587] This is a cause of strife and point of contention between Judaism and Islam: the first tracing its lineage back to Isaac and the people of Israel (Jacob), the second back to Ishmael (and the Arab people), with the shared ancestor of Abraham. As Anidjar writes, '[t]he two brothers, each prefiguring one of two nations that the Bible promises, thus provide the poles of an oscillation that never quite gathers as the Arab Jew'.[588] In

[585] Chouraqui, *Lettre à un ami arabe*, p. 28.

[586] Marc-Alain Quaknin and Dory Rotnemer, *Le Livre de prénoms bibliques et hébraïques* (Paris: Albin Michel, 1993), p. 63.

[587] In Genesis, it is written that 'Abraham begot Isaac' and that 'Hagar the Egyptian, Sarah's maidservant, bore [Ishmael] to Abraham' (Genesis 25:19, 12). With reference to these genealogies recorded in Genesis and the Midrash's commentary on them, Clifton Payne explains the significance of the terms *yachad* ('unique and especially beloved') and *holid* ('begot', that is, 'to have the full nature of and to be exactly like'). Payne explains that the term 'begotten' was used for Isaac as though he were the only son, and not for Ishmael who, having committed idolatry, was cut off and treated as though he had not been born. Clifton Payne, 'The "Only Begotten" Son', *The Jerusalem Perspective*, 1 January 2004, <http://www.jerusalemperspective.com/4596/> [accessed 15 September 2016]. See also Quaknin and Rotnemer, 'Isaac', in *Le Livre de prénoms bibliques et hébraïques*, pp. 76-77.

[588] Gil Anidjar, 'Introduction: "Once More, Once More": Derrida, the Arab, the Jew', in Jacques Derrida, *Acts of Religion*, trans. by Gil Anidjar (New York and London: Routledge, 2002), pp. 1-39 (p. 9).

Prophètes sans dieu, the author-character, speaking to (the actor playing) Moses, says, 'Toi, Moïse, tu es le fils d'Abraham par Isaac, et lui [Mahomet] le fils d'Abraham par Ishmaël. […] Et vous seriez tous deux enfants d'Israël si Israël pouvait contenir tous ses enfants'.[589]

In her analysis of the *L'Avenir oublié*, and specifically in relation to its female characters, Rachel Nisselson writes:

> [w]hile all of the characters in Benaïssa's *L'avenir* [*sic*] are allegorical in nature, the mothers are perhaps the most so. In fact, though Benaïssa names Josette and Fatima in the dramatis personae, throughout the play he attributes their speeches simply to "La mere," [*sic*] a stylistic choice that underscores the figurative nature of these characters.[590]

In my interview with him, Benaïssa elaborated upon the figure of the mother in *L'Avenir oublié*:

> Il y a deux mères dans cette pièce. Ce sont elles qui construisent. […] La mère juive doit produire la quantité d'israéliens nécessaires. On est juif par la mère, donc même la responsabilité religieuse lui revient, elle n'est pas paternelle. De l'autre côté, c'est la mère palestinienne qui subit la mort des enfants, leur

[589] Benaïssa, *Prophètes sans dieu*, p. 32.
[590] Nisselson, 'Remembering the Future', p. 16.

> disparition, leur exil… elle est au cœur de tous les conflits, en tant que femme et en tant que mère. C'est aussi compliqué pour les unes que pour les autres.

Moreover, when I asked him about the Jewish mother as recounting memories of both the Shoah and Jewish-Muslim coexistence in Algeria, he justified this enigmatic choice as follows: 'C'est faire appel à la problématique sépharade-ashkénaze, qui est un vrai problème. J'ai voulu regrouper les deux. Je ne voulais pas que cette mère soit uniquement considérée comme ashkénaze ou comme sépharade'.[591] More than (or perhaps less than) a stylistic gesture towards allegory, these mother figures are either caricatured as hysterical by the male playwright or silenced by male characters within the play.[592] Nevertheless, their names are significant and in a sense speak for themselves. Fatima's name points both to Islam and to Roman Catholicism. The 'original' Fatima was born in Mecca to Muhammad's first wife, and died in Medina. According to Islamic tradition, Muhammad left her 'un souvenir' in the form of land conquered from a Jewish tribe.[593] In Roman Catholic tradition, meanwhile, the

[591] Benaïssa qtd. in Vince, '"Je commence là où ça se tait"', p. 9.
[592] Aslanov writes that Josette is 'a caricature of the hysterical and intrusive *yiddishe mame*'. Aslanov, 'Slimane Benaïssa, or the Voice of Dissidence', p. 69.
[593] Charles Virolleaud, 'La légende de Fatima, fille de Mahomet', *Journal des savants*, April-June (1945), 63-71 (p. 64).

Lady of Fatima is another name for the Blessed Virgin Mary, who was purported to have been seen in 1917 close to Fatima, a town in Portugal (itself named after a legendary Moorish princess who converted to Christianity and subsequently took the name Oureana). It is therefore no coincidence that the Muslim Arab mother who married a Christian in a Palestinian refugee camp is named Fatima, drawing together the two religions to which this name points.

With regard to Josette and Joseph, Aslanov notes that '[t]he aggravating presence of the mother is [...] stressed by the fact that Joseph bears a name that is the masculine counterpart of Josette'.[594] It would be more accurate to say that Josette's name is the feminine derivative of Joseph.[595] In the Hebrew Bible, Joseph is the favourite son of Jacob, who is the third of the patriarchs in Jewish tradition. Joseph was sold into slavery in Egypt, where a Jewish presence was to remain until the exodus led by Moses, which concluded with Joshua's conquest of the 'Promised Land' of Canaan. According to *Le Livre des prénoms bibliques et hébraïques*, Joseph is thus 'le moteur de l'histoire juive', for without him, 'il n'y aurait pas eu de séjour en Égypte, ni la sortie d'Égypte, qui est le commencement de l'apprentissage de la

[594] Aslanov, 'Slimane Benaïssa, or the Voice of Dissidence', p. 69.
[595] Quaknin and Rotnemer, *Le Livre de prénoms bibliques et hébraïques*, p. 430.

liberté'.[596] According to Memmi and Chouraqui, this process of liberation would reach its fulfilment in Zionism. Hence Chouraqui's religious overtones in describing Jewish 'retour' to 'la terre d'Israël': 'En mettant le pied sur la passerelle qui le ramène au pays de ses ancêtres, […] [le juif] a rejeté le joug de l'esclavage'.[597] The reference to slavery is significant here as it alludes to the Biblical exodus from Egypt resulting in arrival in the Promised Land.

In *Ce que je crois*, Chouraqui expounds his own conceptualisation of the Abrahamic. He begins by rejecting the assumption that there exists an 'haine héréditaire' between Jews and Arabs, which leaves the conflict in a perpetual state of impasse.[598] Instead, he espouses peace and reconciliation based upon historical affiliation between Jews and Arabs on multiple levels, from spiritual to relational:

> Mon espoir de paix se fonde, au-delà des péripéties de nos conflits actuels, sur l'extraordinaire parallélisme de l'histoire des Arabes et des juifs qui se proclament ensemble *fils d'Abraham*, qui prennent leur essor dans la même partie du monde où ils entretiennent dès la plus haute antiquité des relations spirituelles, intellectuelles, commerciales et sociales.[599]

[596] *Ibid*., p. 83.
[597] Chouraqui, *Ce que je crois*, p. 205.
[598] *Ibid*., p. 276.
[599] *Ibid*., p. 285, emphasis mine.

Chouraqui's claim to historical parallelism is somewhat controversial, as he suggests that this takes the form of colonialism and anti-Semitism, resulting in the subsequent mutual need for self-determination fulfilled in Arab nationalism and Zionism, respectively: 'La souffrance arabe et la souffrance judaïque, provoquée par de mêmes intérêts, donnèrent naissance à des mouvements intellectuels et politiques simultanés, parallèles et même lorsqu'ils se dressèrent l'un contre l'autre, de nature comparable'.[600] Said takes this a step further in his essay 'Bases for Coexistence' in which he writes that 'unless the connection is made by which the Jewish tragedy is seen to have led directly to the Palestinian catastrophe by, let us call it "necessity" (rather than pure will), we cannot co-exist as two communities of detached and uncommunicatingly separate suffering'.[601] Drawing from Said, Hochberg writes that 'the two histories and collective traumatic memories – the Jewish and Palestinian – are not, truly speaking, independent but must be resituated and

[600] *Ibid*., pp. 285-86.
[601] Said, 'Bases for Coexistence', pp. 207-8. In another essay, Said is clearer and less forgiving in his indictment: 'the Jewish victims of European anti-Semitism came to Palestine and created a new victim, the Palestinians, who today are nothing less than the victim of the victims. Hardly anything can mitigate the shattering historical truth that the creation of Israel meant the destruction of Palestine'. Said, 'Nationalism, Human Rights, and Interpretation', p. 433.

understood along a shared historical trajectory'.[602]

According to Hochberg, 'literature, thanks to its critical distance from reality and its reliance on metaphoric language, may help us "see," if only momentarily, the intricate process of identification and differentiation that precedes and assures the becoming of the self in relation to otherness'.[603] She goes on to write that '[i]n retracing this process of self-formation, literature maybe better than any other discursive practice, is capable of supplementing the economy of identity (I versus You, Arab versus Jew) with an economy of relation (I as You, Arab as Jew)'.[604] Similarly, the audience of *L'Avenir oublié* 'watch' this process of self-(trans)formation being 'played out' as it is staged and performed. In the light of this, it is all the more significant that Isac is played by Benaïssa in one performance of the play, in which he donned a *kippa* (skullcap) as part of the role.[605] In an interview, Benaïssa states that '[s]i je ne joue pas l'autre, je ne résous aucun problème avec l'autre. Si moi je ne te joue pas et toi tu ne me joues pas, il n'y a rien qui se passe'.[606] In this way, he acts out the Abrahamic within and engages with the internal other as, according to him, '[l]a

[602] Hochberg, *In Spite of Partition*, p. 19.
[603] *Ibid*., p. 16.
[604] *Ibid*., p. 16.
[605] See Nisselson, 'Remembering the Future', pp. 12-13.
[606] Benaïssa qtd. in Nisselson, 'Remembering the Future', p. 12.

meilleure façon de considérer l'autre, c'est d'être l'autre, de vivre avec l'idée que l'autre c'est tout simplement moi. L'autre est en nous!'.[607]

By finishing their respective monologues with the same question – 'Comment se dire autrement?' – and in their quasi-orphan status,[608] Joseph and Antoine-Nasser demonstrate a fragmented poetic of relation which forms a basis of coexistence as they engage in dialogue with one another as characters within the text, just as Benaïssa and Chouraqui engage in dialogue with one another as writers through and outside of the text. In their dialogue within the text, Joseph and Antoine-Nasser echo Chouraqui's words: 'Je te suis'. While this translates into following, it also evokes being other in Rimbaud's sense: 'Je est un autre'.[609] In building the well together in the opening and closing scenes, these fatherless brothers create a new sense of fraternity which simultaneously returns to and moves away from the Abrahamic. As Chouraqui writes both nostalgically and optimistically in *Lettre à un ami arabe*,

[607] Benaïssa, 'Juif et arabe, deux ou trois choses dont nous avons discuté, André et Moi'.
[608] In speaking of her son Antoine-Nasser, Fatima says, 'il parle comme un orphelin' (*AO*, p. 31), echoing Joseph's words, 'Je n'ai ni père ni mère. Je suis un orphelin historique' (*AO*, p. 9).
[609] Le Bris and Rouaud include this quotation in the title of their sequel to *Pour une littérature-monde en français*, namely *Je est un autre: Pour une identité-monde*.

> tout a été préparé de toute éternité afin que nous nous reconnaissions pour frères, que nous nous entendions et que nous coopérions dans l'amour, le courage et la fidélité, afin justement d'assurer sur cette terre la promotion du royaume d'unité et d'amour dont l'espoir fonde non seulement nos vocations, mais notre être même.[610]

This is a fraternity which is not based on past (rival) ancestry nor overcome by traumatic experiences and present circumstances, but rather one which looks towards what Said terms a 'common future', which 'include[s] Arabs and Jews together, free of any exclusionary, denial-based schemes for shutting out one side by the other'.[611]

To conclude, this chapter has demonstrated the potential of coexistence between Arabs and Jews, Israelis and Palestinians, in its exploration of alternatives to antagonistic identity positions in the context of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict as depicted in *L'Avenir oublié*. The dialectal structure of the play lends itself to a dialogic approach, taking into account the interrelated traumatic legacies of the Shoah and the Nakba, and culminating in a synthetic interfaith exchange between Joseph (a Jewish Israeli with Ashkenazi/Sephardi heritage) and Antoine-Nasser (an Arab Israeli with Christian and Muslim parents). This exchange

[610] Chouraqui, *Lettre à un ami arabe*, p. 28.
[611] Said, 'Bases for Coexistence', p. 209.

is premised on the extratextual dialogue between Benaïssa and Chouraqui who find common ground through their joint Algerian heritage, but also feel a sense of affiliation through exilic experience and religious identity. Thus, to quote Katz, Benaïssa and Chouraqui, alongside the characters Antoine-Nasser and Joseph, 'reimagine a complex history of Muslim-Jewish kinship, even brotherhood. In thinking their way out of the present, they remind us that the future, too, may yield an unexpected narrative',[612] 'un avenir oublié' perhaps, but not 'perdu'. This concept of Muslim-Jewish kinship will be explored in the following chapter, in relation to the seemingly paradoxical identities of the Arab/Berber-Jew and the Jewish-Palestinian as depicted in Haddad's *Palestine*.

[612] Katz, *The Burdens of Brotherhood*, p. 327.

CHAPTER III

Paradoxical Identities? The Arab-Jew and the Jewish-Palestinian

Hubert Haddad is a Jewish Maghrebi writer living in France, having been exiled from North Africa at a young age following the establishment of the State of Israel, and can thus be seen as part of a Jewish-postcolonial diaspora, subsequently adopting what Goetschel and Quayson term 'a conjoined postcolonial and Jewish perspective'.[613] He was born in Tunisia the year the State of Israel was founded, to a Jewish mother of Algerian descent and a Tunisian father with Judeo-Berber origins.[614] Exile and conflict are key themes for Haddad, defining his life and writing. He is best known for his novel *Palestine* (2007), which will form the basis of this chapter.[615] One of his earlier novels, *Les Derniers jours d'un homme heureux* (1980), centres on the Algerian War of Independence which overshadowed his youth, while a more

[613] Although I am referring to Cheyette's concept of 'Jewish/postcolonial diasporas', I am intentionally substituting the slash with a hyphen, emphasising the coexistence of these two identities and ways of thinking, as illustrated in Haddad's writing. See Cheyette, 'Jewish/Postcolonial Diasporas', pp. 1-2. Goetschel and Quayson, 'Introduction: Jewish Studies and Postcolonialism', p. 9.

[614] In an interview for the literary review *Secousse*, Haddad declares that 'du côté de mon père, ce sont d'authentiques tunisiens, des arabo-berbères de confession juive' (note the claim to authenticity). Haddad qtd. in Anne Segal and Gérard Cartier, 'Entretien', *Secousse*, 2015, <http://www.revue-secousse.fr/index2.htm> [accessed 23 February 2018].

[615] Hubert Haddad, *Palestine* (Paris: Zulma, 2007). All references to the primary text shall appear in brackets as follows: *P*, page number.

recent novel, *Opium Poppy* (2011), follows the journey of an Afghani child soldier.[616] Yet Haddad is also interested in wider themes of memory, identity, and the creative process, to which his world literature *œuvre* testifies. *Les Coïncidences exagérées* (2016), which begins with the Paris attacks of November 2015 and the death of Hubert Haddad's brother in hospital on the same day, explores philosophical questions of life, death, and (non-)belonging.[617] I met Haddad at a *rencontre croisée* between him and Cécile Oumhani, author of *Tunisian Yankee* (2016), in October 2016 at the Librairie Les Oiseaux rares in Paris, which resulted in an interview that will feature in what follows, alongside analysis of Haddad's *Palestine*.[618]

In his contribution to *Une enfance juive en Méditerranée musulmane* (2012), a collection of autobiographical essays, Haddad writes nostalgically of 'la parentèle arabisée de longue date de la Hara paternelle et les Guedj venus de Constantine, la cité des ponts suspendus où l'Andalousie judéo-arabe [...]

[616] Hubert Haddad, *Les Derniers jours d'un homme heureux* (Paris: Albin Michel, 1980); and Hubert Haddad, *Opium Poppy* (Paris: Zulma, 2011).
[617] Hubert Haddad, *Les Coïncidences exagérées* (Paris: Mercure de France, 2016). This book is part of the 'Traits et portraits' collection initiated by fellow Tunisian Jewish author Colette Fellous in 2004.
[618] Cécile Oumhani, *Tunisian Yankee* (Tunis: Elyzad, 2016). An abridged, edited version of my interview with Haddad can be found in *Bulletin of the Society for Francophone Postcolonial Studies*. Rebekah Vince, '"L'humain n'a pas de frontière": An Interview with Hubert Haddad', *Bulletin of the Society for Francophone Postcolonial Studies*, 8.1 (2017), 2-11.

s'était jadis épanouie',[619] evoking the Golden Age of Arab-Jewish coexistence in Andalusia.[620] He differentiates between Algerians and Tunisians (of which Jews), stating that '[il s'agit] de cultures différentes', emphasising difference while claiming a common Mediterranean identity.[621] Elsewhere, he describes the Jews of North Africa as a whole as 'une population mise en péril par les soubresauts liés aux aléas de la décolonisation et aux fièvres identitaires des nationalismes'.[622] Bearing all of this in mind, it is significant that Haddad refers to himself as 'un Berbère judaïsé et un Juif arabisé'.[623] Interestingly, in this self-definition, Haddad does not refer to the French aspect of his identity, connected mainly to the language in which he writes and the country in which he resides: 'Je demeure à Paris, et c'est dans la langue française que j'écris exclusivement, n'en connaissant point d'autres à fond'.[624]

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[619] Hubert Haddad, 'D'ailes et d'empreintes', in *Une enfance juive en Méditerranée musulmane*, ed. by Leïla Sebbar (Saint-Pourçain-sur-Sioule: Bleu autour, 2012), pp. 173-82 (p. 177).

[620] See Yuval Evri, *Translating the Arab-Jewish Tradition: From al-Andalus to Palestine/Land of Israel*, *Essays of the Forum Transregionale Studien*, 1 (Berlin: Forum Transregionale Studien, 2016), 1-40, in particular pp. 4-6, 21.

[621] Haddad qtd. in Marie-Christine Simonet, 'Hubert Haddad', *Bibliothèque francophone multimédia de Limoges*, 10 November 2009, <http://www.bm-limoges.fr/espace-auteur/haddad/auteur-biographie.php> [accessed 4 October 2016].

[622] Haddad, 'D'ailes et d'empreintes', pp. 178-79.

[623] Haddad qtd. in Simonet, 'Hubert Haddad'.

[624] Haddad, interviewed by Vince. Elsewhere, Haddad speaks of 'l'obligation d'opter pour la langue française, l'impossibilité de communiquer avec les adultes restés intimement dans cette langue arabe qu'ils nous

Although having spent most of his life in France, he admits in an interview with *Le Soir d'Algérie* that '[s]'il ne tenait qu'à moi, je reviendrais vivre dans mon pays de naissance […], mais la vie nous bouscule à cause des guerres et autres dissensions', revealing a deep connection to his native country from which he remains in exile.[625] Elsewhere, Haddad refers to himself as 'un juif-arabe qui a vécu [la] tragédie [du] conflit israélo-palestinien depuis l'enfance'.[626] It is this conflict that forms the focus of his novel *Palestine*, which won the Prix des cinq continents de la francophonie (2008) and the first Prix Renaudot Poche (2009). In my interview with him, Haddad confessed that 'j'ai écrit ce livre parce que je suis traversé par ce drame […], je suis déchiré par cette histoire'.[627]

Therefore, Haddad writes as both an insider and an outsider, with a sensibility for both Arabic and Hebrew, while situating himself within *la francophonie* as a Franco-Maghrebi Jew. Haddad's *Palestine* adopts the

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interdisent'. Haddad qtd. in Segal and Cartier, 'Entretien'.

[625] Haddad qtd. in Abdelmadjid Kaouah, 'L'Écrivain Hubert Haddad au Soir d'Algérie: « L'Utopie est toujours d'actualité! »', *Le Soir d'Algérie*, 7 December 2014,<http://www.lesoirdalgerie.com/articles/2014/12/07/article.php?sid=171820&cid=16> [accessed 4 January 2017].

[626] Haddad qtd. in Marilyn Matar, '« A la croisée des chemins, il peut y avoir l'autre » Lecture croisée de *Littoral* de Wajdi Mouawad, *Les Versets du Pardon* de Myriam Antaki, et *Palestine* de Hubert Haddad', *Contemporary French and Francophone Studies*, 17 (2013), 512-20 (p. 513).

[627] Haddad qtd. in Vince, '"L'humain n'a pas de frontière"', p. 9.

third-person omniscient point of view, enabling the narrator (and the reader) to cross borders, whether defined by geography or gender. The novel narrates the story of Cham, a disillusioned soldier in the Israeli Defense Forces, who is taken hostage by Palestinian fedayeen, following the loss of his identity papers and the murder of fellow soldier Tzvi. Left for dead in a Christian grave in a Muslim cemetery in the West Bank, Cham emerges in a state of amnesia and is subsequently adopted by Palestinian Falastìn and her blind mother, who believe he is one of the fedayeen and consequently offer '[le] rebelle' a temporary hiding place in their home (*P*, pp. 29-31).[628] Cham eventually becomes a substitute for their long-lost brother and son, Nessim, a Palestinian peace activist who has gone missing. Thus Cham-Nessim sees everyday life 'on the other side' from the point of view of the politically disabled Palestinian 'other', which he assimilates into his own sense of 'self'.[629] In the process, Cham-Nessim symbolically falls in love with his adoptive

[628] Asmahane's blindness was self-inflicted, following the murder of her husband: 'Devenue aveugle par fidélité, Asmahane vit seule désormais avec l'image sauve de son amant' (*P*, p. 37). See also *P*, pp. 45-46.

[629] I am opting for Matar's use of the hyphen (as in 'Cham-Nessim') rather than Debrauwere-Miller's use of the slash (as in 'Cham/Nessim') to refer to the protagonist, who in the novel goes from Cham to Nessim and then back to Cham. Slashes, I would argue, suggest opposition, while hyphens suggest memories in tension, conflicted (but not always conflicting) identities. See Matar, '« A la croisée des chemins, il peut y avoir l'autre »', pp. 518-19; and Nathalie Debrauwere-Miller, '"Neither Victims nor Executioners" in Hubert Haddad's *Palestine*', *South Central Review*, 32 (2015), 67-92 (pp. 75, 79, 84).

sister Falastìn. Indeed, *Palestine*, which focuses on '[la] tragédie [du] conflit israélo-palestinien', written from the perspective of 'un juif-arabe', is itself a tragedy, with Falastìn as a modern-day Antigone mourning her two brothers who become one: from Palestinian (Nessim) to Israeli (Cham) to Jewish-Palestinian (Cham-Nessim). In my interview with him, Haddad stated that 'Falastìn est une Antigone définitive et sa mère aveugle un tombeau', alluding to the moment in the novel when the mother Asmahane is buried under her bulldozed house.[630] Referring to the character of Falastìn in Haddad's *Palestine*, literary critic Jean-Claude Lebrun writes: '[p]areille à l'Antigone de Sophocle, amoureuse de son frère et rebelle dans la cité, celle-ci incarne la continuation d'une tradition de refus de la convention et de la soumission'.[631] In Haddad's *Palestine*, geographical borders remain unyielding and territories contested, while ideological and identitarian barriers are temporarily broken down. Yet the novel's tragic ending demonstrates the current impossibility of Jewish-Palestinian identity, an explosive contradiction in terms.

Shenhav and Hannan Hever argue that '[t]he hyphen produces a semantic explosion that challenges the very assumptions upon which the national Jewish discourse is

[630] Haddad, interviewed by Vince.
[631] Jean-Claude Lebrun, 'Une dérangeante fiction', *L'Humanité*, 13 September 2007.

founded'.[632] Although here they are writing about the Arab-Jew (to which we will return later), I would extend their argument about the hyphen to the Jewish-Palestinian, adding that it challenges not only the assumptions behind Zionist discourse but also the assumptions behind nationalist Palestinian discourse. Although these discourses differ greatly, they have in common a denial of an Arab-Jewish – or a Jewish-Palestinian – symbiosis. The concept of the 'Jewish-Palestinian', coined by Said, coincides with Haddad's notion of 'Palestinisraël' which he regrets is made improbable by contemporary identitarian tensions in the region.[633]

This chapter begins by situating Haddad within wider discourses of *la francophonie* and the Mediterranean, discerning where France, North Africa, and Palestine/Israel might fit into these linguistic, spatial, and cultural frameworks. It then goes on to explore the potential for what Rothberg terms 'differentiated solidarity'[634] through the conflicted identity of the Jewish-Palestinian as depicted in Haddad's *Palestine*, and the geopolitical issue of the border/fence/wall, which separates Israel from the West Bank,

[632] Yehouda Shenhav and Hannan Hever, '"Arab Jews" After Structuralism: Zionist Discourse and the (De)formation of an Ethnic Identity', *Social Identities*, 18 (2012), 101-18 (108).
[633] See Edward Said, 'My Right of Return', in *Powers, Politics, and Culture: Interviews with Edward W. Said*, ed. by Gauri Viswanathan (London: Bloomsbury, 2001), pp. 443-58 (p. 458). See Marin La Meslée, 'Hubert Haddad'.
[634] See Rothberg, 'From Gaza to Warsaw', p. 526.

paying particular attention to how the infrastructure is referred to in the novel. This is followed by an exploration of self and other in terms of the ideological antagonism between Orientalism and Occidentalism, and between Arab and Jew. Finally, the chapter concludes with an investigation of the potential for reciprocity advocated in Haddad's *Palestine*, a novel which calls for solidarity as opposed to 'memory wars',[635] and empathy rather than appropriation.

Francophonie and the Mediterranean

Haddad's relationship with the French language is a complex one. Having fled colonial Tunisia with his parents at a young age, he writes of how 'je me suis bricolé à partir d'une langue d'accueil qui fut aussi de conquête et de discrimination'.[636] Haddad places the concept of *la francophonie* within the wider context of the French-speaking world as a whole:

> C'est au moins 200 millions de locuteurs dans le monde, et bien plus d'interlocuteurs. C'est une richesse extraordinaire, parce qu'une voix qui franchit la barrière du silence aux Caraïbes, au Maghreb ou en Afrique

[635] *Ibid*, p. 523.
[636] Hubert Haddad, 'Le Monde n'appartient à personne', in *Apulée n°1 – Galaxies identitaires*, ed. by Hubert Haddad (Paris: Zulma, 2016), pp. 174-79 (p. 174).

> ressuscite la langue française hors de toute appartenance. Et c'est le devoir de l'État français de maintenir et même de développer la vitalité de la langue française partout dans le monde. Comment pérenniser autrement la culture et la littérature francophones, qui ne sont pas sa propriété, mais le plus beau legs fait au monde, un espace d'invention universel et libre d'où surgit à tout moment cette nouveauté métissée, critique, vivante qui nous échappe et par là même nous sauve?[637]

At first, Haddad seems to advocate a Franco-centric *francophonie* but he then decentralises Francophone literature and culture, advocating invention, criticism, cross-pollination, and dynamism over static linguistic norms dictated by the nation-state of France. The French language, he argues, is inclusive rather than exclusive. Belonging to no-one, it breaks through barriers of silence and silencing to emerge as a free and liberating voice, unbound by the nation-state, specifically Franco-centric, framework. Elsewhere, Haddad argues that '[u]ne langue qui n'est pas revitalisée par des apports multiples dépérit'.[638] Speaking from his own experience, he states that it is 'quand je lis les écrivains francophones d'ici et là […], des

[637] Haddad qtd. in Marin La Meslée, 'Hubert Haddad'.
[638] Hubert Haddad, 'Hubert Haddad', in *La Langue française vue de la Méditerranée*, ed. by Patrice Martin and Christophe Drevet (Léchelle: Zellige, 2009), pp. 73-77 (p. 74).

poètes maghrébins, d'Afrique noire, du Québec', that 'je vois que c'est une langue vivante'.[639] Moreover, he argues that '[a]u sein même de l'Hexagone, l'apport vient de l'immigration, en grande partie', highlighting 'la richesse […] de la rencontre, du croisement'.[640] He thus advocates *francophonie* within and without the Hexagon, on a local, national, and global or transnational scale.[641]

In another interview, Haddad is specifically asked about his views on the manifesto *Pour une littérature-monde en français* and whether he shares its sentiment. The aforementioned manifesto eulogises the French language and its universal potential, even in its aim to challenge the arguably neo-colonial concept of *la francophonie*.[642] Haddad's response to the question reveals a somewhat cynical and anti-conformist attitude:

> Ces écrivains se sont rassemblés sur un coup de tête en voulant s'approprier dans un mouvement unanimiste une pensée de l'ailleurs qu'ils n'avaient guère, pour nombre d'entre eux, défendue auparavant. L'envers de la médaille, c'est une sorte d'universalisme centralisé, parfaitement orthodoxe et normé, qui fournit des motifs idéologiques pour

[639] *Ibid*., pp. 74-75.
[640] *Ibid*., pp. 74-75.
[641] *Ibid*., p. 75.
[642] Le Bris and Rouaud, eds. *Pour une littérature-monde en français*.

> rejeter l'altérité comme elle surgit, inédite, inclassable, des lointains de la langue, qu'ils soient géographiques ou non. Je refuse de mon côté tout élitisme, même à des fins humanistes. Il faut donner à chacun toutes les chances de la parole.[643]

Here, Haddad advocates decentralised inclusivity and universalism over what he sees as elitist posturing and norms. 'Ce qui nous manque', he concludes, 'ce n'est pas une littérature monde, c'est le monde', a distinctly humanist and redemptive vision in which '[c]hacun doit être pour l'autre son salut'.[644] According to Haddad, language and humanity are interconnected: '[i]l n'y a pas d'humanité hors de l'espace du langage: un moment privilégié consiste à faire surgir une parole poétique de la part […] de gens qui ont passé leur vie dans le dénuement'.[645] 'C'est ce lien que j'ai essayé de construire ici et là', he declares.[646] Incidentally, Haddad publishes predominately with Zulma (under the category 'littérature de langue française'), which brands itself as a publisher of 'littératures du monde entier', including African languages, and translations from other languages into French. Haddad recently initiated the journal

[643] Hubert Haddad qtd. in Armen V. and Célia Sadai, 'Entretien inédit avec Hubert Haddad (2ème partie)', *La Plume Francophone*, 21 August 2010, <http://la-plume-francophone.over-blog.com/article-entretien-inedit-avec-hubert-haddad-2eme-partie-64272512.html> [accessed 4 October 2016].
[644] *Ibid*.
[645] *Ibid*.
[646] *Ibid*.

Apulée: Revue annuelle de littérature et de réflexion, published by Zulma. *Apulée*, named after the Berber writer Apolius, is a journal '[qui] s'engage à parler du monde d'une manière décentrée, nomade, investigatrice, loin d'un point de vue étroitement hexagonal, avec pour premier espace d'enjeu l'Afrique et la Méditerranée'.[647] The journal, which has a Mediterranean emphasis but is not restricted to the basin, aims to decentralise elitist and Eurocentric world literature structures. Rather, it situates itself within the wider framework of literatures from across the world, adopting a multilingual as well as a multicultural approach.[648]

Although sceptical about the motives and benefits of a *littérature-monde en français*, Haddad did speak at a conference in Saint-Malo on the occasion of the Année mondiale de la literature (2013), co-organised by Étonnants Voyageurs and the Edinburgh World Writers' Conference. His keynote was on the subject of style and content in literature, and was entitled 'Le Sentiment du monde', referring to André Malraux, who wrote '[l]e style, c'est le sentiment du monde'.[649] In this keynote, Haddad stated that

[647] 'Apulée n°1 — Galaxies identitaires', *Zulma*, 11 February 2016, <http://www.zulma.fr/livre-apulee-n1-galaxies-identitaires-572126.html> [accessed 13 December 2016].

[648] All contributions not originally written in French feature in their original language, accompanied by a French translation for accessibility.

[649] Hubert Haddad, 'Le Sentiment du monde', *Edinburgh World Writers Conference*, Saint-Malo, 19

'[l]a littérature seule donne à la réalité sa dimension tout à la fois allusive, fatale, imprévisible, fabuleuse, démesurément ouverte aux interprétations' and that '[l]a littérature, de concert avec tout le champ artistique, n'est autre que la réalité qui prend conscience d'elle-même dans son activité énigmatique, symbolique et profane'.[650] In keeping with this description, his novel *Palestine* is both enigmatic and symbolic, with a hint of the fantastical, disbelief suspended by its anchoring in on-the-ground reality. In his interview with *Le Soir d'Algérie*, Haddad argues that 'il n'y a pas de séparation entre imaginaire et réalité' in both 'le domaine romanesque' and 'la réflexion socio-historique', which he combines in *Palestine*, a novel that has been described (and dismissed) as 'reportage poétique', a kind of 'récit journalistique' or 'journalisme narratif'.[651] According to Haddad, '[l]e romancier n'est pas un reporter'.[652] Indeed, for him, the very term 'reportage poétique' is an oxymoron as it is poetry which differentiates journalism from novelistic

May 2013, <http://www.zulma.fr/auteur-hubert-haddad-41.html> [accessed 8 October 2016].

[650] Haddad, 'Le Sentiment du monde'.

[651] See Harrison, *Transcolonial Maghreb*, p. 10. See also Nicolas Pélissier and Alexandre Eyriès, 'Fictions du réel: le journalisme narratif', *Cahiers de Narratologie*, 26 (2014), <http://narratologie.revues.org/6852> [accessed 4 January 2017]; and Marie Vanoost, 'Journalisme narrative: proposition de définition, entre narratologie et éthique', *Les Cahiers du journalisme*, 25 (2013), 140-61.

[652] Haddad qtd. in Segal and Cartier, 'Entretien'.

writing.[653] As will be demonstrated, *Palestine* is not 'devoid of any historical background', as Harrison contends,[654] neither does it profess to be a historical document or a human rights report; rather it combines reality (whether past or present) with imagination in a fictional account or *récit*.

Haddad also features in the more regionally-specific anthologies of autobiographical essays *Enfances tunisiennes* (2010) and, as already mentioned, *Une enfance juive en Méditerranée musulmane*.[655] In his contribution to the latter, he draws particular attention to his grandmother, Baya, who was born in 19th-century colonial Algeria. She recalled 'des émeutes antijuives' which, according to Haddad, were 'suscitées à Constantine par la France antisémite des Deuxième et Troisième Républiques'.[656] Similarly, Benjamin Stora writes of 'l'antisémitisme européen si puisant dans l'Algérie coloniale'.[657] As for the Crémieux Decree of 1870, Haddad claims it was counterintuitive, segregating Muslims from Jews: '[p]ar malheureux contrecoup, ce fameux décret isolera définitivement les Algériens israélites de leurs compatriotes

[653] Haddad, interviewed by Vince.
[654] Harrison, *Transcolonial Maghreb*, p. 10.
[655] See Haddad, 'D'ailes et d'empreintes', pp. 173-82; Hubert Haddad, 'L'Été d'un loir', in *Enfances tunisiennes*, ed. by Leïla Sebbar and Sophie Bessis (Tunis: Elyzad, 2010), pp. 112-21.
[656] Haddad, 'D'ailes et d'empreintes', p. 180. See also Charles-Robert Ageron, 'Une émeute anti-juive à Constantine (août 1934)', *Revue de l'Occident musulman et de la Méditerranée*, 13 (1973), 23-40.
[657] Stora, *Les Trois exils*, p. 15. See also pp. 57-60.

musulmans, sur fond de crise économique et identitaire'.[658] This echoes Chouraqui's words in *Lettre à un ami arabe*: '[le] décret Crémieux [...] avait accordé aux Juifs la nationalité française, les coupant ainsi radicalement de la communauté musulmane, en marge de laquelle ils avaient vécu pendant des siècles'.[659] In his book *Les Trois exils: Juifs d'Algérie* (2006), Stora describes the decree as a 'rupture' and as 'un *premier exil*, celui qui les a séparés des autres « indigènes », les musulmans', forming part of 'l'assimilation républicaine [des Juifs]'.[660] This was an internal exile in 'la terre d'origine où les liens sont très anciens', whereby 'les juifs d'Algérie se sont […] déplacés […] hors de la tradition juive en terre d'islam'.[661] Similarly, in relation to the French colonial protectorate of Tunisia, Lamia Ben Youssef Zayzafoon writes that '[i]t is through the privilege of citizenship that French colonialism pitted the Jew against the Arab' as part of a divide-and-rule strategy.[662]

In my interview with him, Haddad differentiated between exile, which he sees as definitive and individual (as opposed to

[658] Haddad, 'D'ailes et d'empreintes', p. 180. For more on this, see Stora, *Les Trois exils*, pp. 63-64.
[659] Chouraqui, *Lettre à un ami arabe*, p. 24.
[660] Stora, *Les Trois exils*, pp. 13, 14, original emphasis. For more on this, see 'Premier exil: La séparation', in *Les Trois exils*, pp. 23-70, particularly pp. 48-54. See also p. 123.
[661] *Ibid*., p. 10.
[662] Lamia Ben Youssef Zayzafoon, 'When "L'Essence Arrose de Haine": The Reinvention of Identity in Francophone Tunisian Literature', in *Israeli-Palestinian Conflict in the Francophone World*, pp. 93-104 (p. 97).

collective as Stora suggests), and exodus, which he sees as temporary and collective. The examples he uses are telling:

> L'exode, ça concerne des populations entières, en référence au deuxième livre de la Bible, la fuite d'Égypte du peuple hébreu conduit par Moïse. […] C'est collectif, et puis l'exode, c'est souvent transitoire. Lors d'une guerre il y a des déplacements de populations, il y a des exils provisoires, comme lors de l'occupation allemande en 1940. Souvent globalement elles vont revenir, ces populations déplacées, mais une partie ne reviendra pas, et pour ceux qui ne reviendront pas, c'est l'exil. Dans l'exil il y a une dimension d'adieu sans retour, et par ailleurs, l'exilé se trouve déporté de son environnement, de son milieu, de sa famille, et tente de se reconstituer ailleurs, dans un ailleurs étrange, un ailleurs qu'il faut apprivoiser.[663]

On the one hand, Haddad refers to the archetypal exodus in the Biblical book by the same name, and then speaks of exodus as mass migration of a temporary nature, using population displacement under the German occupation as an example. He goes on to say that often these displaced peoples return to their country of origin, by implication not only European countries but also the Biblical

[663] Haddad qtd. in Vince, '"L'humain n'a pas de frontière"', p. 4.

land of Canaan, the 'Promised Land'. On the other hand, Haddad depicts exile as a form of deportation; with no promise of return to the familiar country of origin or homeland, there is a sense of necessity to reconstitute life in the foreign or strange (*étrange*) host country. In other words, exodus means 'au'revoir' and exile 'adieu', although of course it is more nuanced than this, because there is an element of choice and an element of enforcement in exile: not all who leave (want to or are able to) return. By Said's definition, as previously noted, exile is 'the unhealable rift forced between a human being and a native place, between the self and its true home'.[664] Using similar language of exilic trauma as open wound,[665] Haddad states that 'l'exil est une blessure qu'on parvient mal à situer dans son corps et dans sa mémoire. Il n'empêche qu'écrire, c'est convoquer l'absence'.[666]

Haddad describes how Baya first immigrated to '[le] métropole' from Algeria with Haddad's mother in 1939, after the pogrom of 1934.[667] This voluntary exile was followed by an enforced one: after the Nazis invaded Paris in June 1940, the matriarch re-embarked on 'le chemin de l'exode', this time

[664] Said, 'Reflections on Exile', p. 173.
[665] Trauma derives from the Greek word for wound. As Caruth writes, 'the term trauma is understood as a wound inflicted not upon the body but upon the mind'. Cathy Caruth, *Unclaimed Experience: Trauma, Narrative, and History* (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 2016 [1996]), p. 3.
[666] Haddad qtd. in Kaouah, 'L'Écrivain Hubert Haddad'.
[667] See Haddad, 'D'ailes et d'empreintes', pp. 179, 177. For more on this, see Stora, *Les Trois exils*, pp. 61-63.

to Tunisia, where Haddad's mother Alice would later meet his father Khamous.[668] Not long after the Nazi invasion of Paris, the Crémieux Decree was revoked in October 1940, which Stora describes as 'un *deuxième exil*, cette fois hors de la communauté française'.[669] This, too, was an internal exile, '[une] expulsion hors de la citoyenneté française' within colonial Algeria, as 'Vichy efface leur appartenance à la nation française acquise depuis soixante-dix ans'.[670] Stora describes how life was made more difficult for Jews in Algeria under the Vichy Regime, and how several work camps were instated, Algerian Jewish soldiers and Gaullists among the detainees.[671] The French protectorate of Tunisia, meanwhile, was to be occupied by the Nazis, and Haddad's father Khamous was to spend several months in a concentration camp there.[672] Later, during the Algerian War,

[668] See Haddad, 'D'ailes et d'empreintes', p. 177.
[669] Stora, *Les Trois exils*, pp. 13-14, original emphasis. For more on this, see 'Deuxième exil: Vichy et l'expulsion de la République', in *Les Trois exils*, pp. 71-126, particularly pp. 80-93, and pp. 124-26. Stora identifies the third exile for Algerian Jews as '[l]a « sortie » d'Algérie' which began in the summer of 1962, following Algerian independence. Stora, *Les Trois exils*, p. 14. For more on this, see 'Troisième exil: La guerre et l'indépendance', pp. 127-70. See also André Chouraqui, *Histoire des Juifs en Afrique du Nord: Le retour en Orient*, pp. 154-56.
[670] Stora, *Les Trois exils*, p. 87.
[671] *Ibid*., pp. 93-94. See also Michel Abitbol, *Les Juifs d'Afrique du Nord sous Vichy* (Paris: Maisonneuve, 1983).
[672] See Stora, *Les Trois exils*, pp. 93-94; and Haddad, 'D'ailes et d'empreintes', pp. 177-78. In relation to Memmi, who voluntarily spent time in one of these camps as an act of solidarity, see Claude Hagège and Bernard Zarca, 'Les Juifs et la France en Tunisie: les bénéfices d'une relation triangulaire', *Le mouvement social*, 197 (2001), 9-28 (p. 27).

when Haddad's family lived in Paris, his father 'était sans cesse contrôlé par la police', presumably for his Maghrebi features.[673]

Alongside Sebbar's edited collections, Haddad appears in *La Langue française vue de la Méditerranée*, a collection of interviews published by Zellige and part of a series which includes *La Langue française vue de l'Afrique et de l'océan indien* and *La Langue française vue des Amériques et de la Caraïbe* (note how the title emphasises the French language as opposed to 'francophonie').[674] In his interview for the collection, Haddad speaks of his multicultural heritage, emphasising the Mediterranean aspect which encompasses the Maghreb but also southern Europe:

> En regardant mes origines, j'ai découvert que ma famille vient de tout le Maghreb: de la Tunisie, de l'Algérie et aussi du Maroc. Également, pour une part, de l'Italie. Ensuite, il y a la famille spirituelle qui est grecque et regroupe toutes les cultures méditerranéennes.[675]

He concludes with the assertion, 'Je suis un Méditerranéen'.[676] Elsewhere, he writes of his early childhood in Tunisia and how he does

[673] See Haddad qtd. in Kaouah, 'L'Écrivain Hubert Haddad'; and Haddad qtd. in Segal and Cartier, 'Entretien'.
[674] See Haddad, 'Hubert Haddad', pp. 73-77.
[675] *Ibid*., p. 75.
[676] Haddad qtd. in Simonet, 'Hubert Haddad'. Haddad, 'Hubert Haddad', p. 75.

not remember any notable differences between his Jewish family and his Muslim neighbours, 'dans ce continuum vivant de la langue et le parage des gouets et des rythmes [...], cette mosaïque de mœurs et de croyances communes, […] ce patchwork civilisateur dont s'enorgueillit à juste titre la Méditerranée'.[677] Increasingly, the term Mediterranean is being used as a bridge between the East and West, encompassing North Africa, the Middle East, and Europe.

According to David Ohana, 'Mediterraneanism is a dialogue between East and West and not an ideology of Orientalism', and it is within this Mediterraneanism that he wishes to situate Israel: 'The Mediterranean option is not a call for ethnic isolation or a return to roots, but for an Israeli ethos that would constitute a common cultural platform for the discussion of tensions and separate identities'.[678] Moreover, Ohana echoes the sentiment of Jean Daniélou's *Méditerranée, carrefour des religions,*[679] in drawing attention to the religious aspect: 'the Mediterranean [...] represents a dialogue [...] between the classical world and the worlds of Judaism, Christianity, and Islam'.[680] Yet Ohana draws extensively from Camus' universalist and arguably Franco-centric

[677] Haddad, 'D'ailes et d'empreintes', p. 176.
[678] David Ohana, *Israel and its Mediterranean Identity* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), pp. viii, 4.
[679] Jean Daniélou, ed. *Méditerranée, carrefour des religions* (Paris: A. Fayard, 1959). This book includes a contribution by Chouraqui.
[680] Ohana, *Israel and its Mediterranean Identity*, p. 4.

humanism in his configuration of the Mediterranean, and he somewhat problematically places Israel as an exemplary starting point.[681] In one of his contributions to the journal *Apulée*, Haddad speaks of the Mediterranean as 'une vraie mosaïque de cultures, de langues, d'influences et de métissages, dont témoigne dans sa complexité, aujourd'hui comme hier, cette civilisation qu'il faudrait appeler « orientalo-occidentale »',[682] highlighting the plurality of identities, including those of Arab-Jews, caught somewhere between the West and Orient(alism), which are intrinsically linked through the hyphen.

Differentiated Solidarity

Said once famously stated, in an interview with Israeli journalist Ari Shavit, 'I am the last Jewish intellectual'.[683] He then qualified this statement by saying, 'I am a Jewish-Palestinian'.[684] It is important to note that Said uses the adjective 'Jewish' not as an ethnic or religious signifier here, but as a floating one, assimilated (as opposed to appropriated) through affiliation and adoption. More

[681] See Ohana, *Israel and its Mediterranean Identity*, pp. 54-56, 135-54.
[682] Hubert Haddad, 'L'Énergie des lointains', *Apulée n°1 – Galaxies identitaires*, pp. 9-11.
[683] See Said, 'My Right of Return', p. 458. In the interview with Shavit, Said states, 'I am the only true follower of Adorno', pitting himself as disciple and Adorno as rabbi. *Ibid*., p. 458. See Bernard, 'The Last Jewish Intellectual', pp. 80-81.
[684] Said, 'My Right of Return', p. 458.

specifically, he is referring to a certain kind of ethical and critical writing exemplified by such Jewish thinkers as Adorno and Arendt, defined by 'exilic singularity and dissidence', with whom he feels an affiliation.[685] Israeli historian Ilan Pappé points out that 'Said "the exiled intellectual" or, more precisely, "the exile intellectual" was attractive to Jewish intellectuals far more than Said "the Palestinian"'.[686] Pappé goes on to write that '[t]he picture, however, was more complicated as this exilic, almost Jewish intellectual, was still the voice of Palestine in the West'.[687] As a Palestinian American intellectual, Said's exile was from Palestine and there was (and is) no way of avoiding that. Although combining these two identities in his self-identification, Said creates a distinction between Jew and Palestinian in his writings on

[685] Bryan Cheyette, '"Enthusiast": A Response to the Responses', *The Cambridge Journal of Postcolonial Literary Inquiry*, 5 (2018), pp. 129-33 (p. 130). See also Cheyette, *Diasporas of the Min*, p. 24. As Cheyette writes elsewhere, 'Said's radical humanism, his embrace of philology, was always aware of its German-Jewish foundations'. Cheyette, 'Jewish/Postcolonial Diasporas: On Being Ill-disciplined', p. 1. See Bryan Cheyette, 'A Glorious Achievement: Edward Said and the Last Jewish Intellectual', in *Edward Said's Translocations: Essays in Secular Criticism*, ed. by Tobias Döring and Mark Stein (London: Routledge, 2012), pp. 78-81. See also Gabriel Piterberg, 'Public Intellectuals and Conscious Pariahs: Hannah Arendt, Edward Said and a Common State in Palestine-Israel', *Holy Land Studies*, 12 (2013), pp. 141-59. See also what Said writes about Adorno in Edward Said, *Representations of the Intellectual: The 1993 Reith Lectures* (London: Vintage, 1994), pp. 41-43.

[686] Ilan Pappé, 'Revisiting Edward W. Said's Palestine: Between Nationalism and Post-Zionism', in *Orientalism Revisited: Art, Land and Voyage*, ed. by Ian Richard Netton (London: Routledge, 2013), pp. 153-64 (p. 161).

[687] *Ibid*., pp. 161-62.

coexistence in the context of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict:

> What is desired [...] is a notion of coexistence that is true to the differences between Jew and Palestinian, but true also to the common history of different struggle and unequal survival that links them. There can be no higher ethical and moral imperative than discussions and dialogues about that.[688]

Hochberg writes that 'it is this keeping-in-difference inseparability of the Jew and the Arab that Said emphasizes in his various writings about [...] the politics of memory in the context of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict'.[689] Alongside this 'keeping-in-difference inseparability' in theory, which might translate into 'differentiated solidarity' in praxis, 'Said's self-designation as a "Jewish-Palestinian" rather than "new [Palestinian] Jew" refuses a supersessionist narrative precisely because such a narrative would reinforce the primacy of Jewish history'.[690] In other words, one does not replace or supersede the other; rather, the hyphenated identity suggests the coexistence of these identities tied up with one another,

[688] Said, 'Bases for Coexistence', p. 208.
[689] Hochberg, 'Edward Said: "The Last Jewish Intellectual"', p. 48.
[690] Rothberg, 'From Gaza to Warsaw', p. 526. Cheyette, '"Enthusiast": A Response to the Responses', p. 131. Here I am drawing from Cheyette's use of Adorno's theory and praxis model. See Cheyette, 'Against Supersessionist Thinking', particularly pp. 424-25, 439.

with their respective histories of suffering and expulsion. As previously noted, according to Rothberg, Said 'had a distinctly transcultural approach to the intersecting memories of all the players in the Middle East conflict'.[691] Again, transculturality is a helpful concept here, embodied in the ambiguous and often mediating positions of Jewish-Palestinian and Arab-Jew. As Debrauwere-Miller notes, 'Haddad's novel could be read as a deconstruction of the Jew/Arab binary'.[692] Similarly, Nisselson writes that 'the parallels constructed between the protagonist's Palestinian self and his Jewish Arab self serve to highlight not only the shared histories of Arab Jews and Arab Muslims, but also the common struggles of Arab Jews and Palestinians in Israel'.[693] It is important to bear in mind, however, as Shipler notes, that '[t]here is no single Arab-Jewish relationship; there are many, and they require an elusive tolerance that must somehow run against the forces of war, nationalism, terrorism, and religious certainty'.[694]

It is therefore significant that Haddad refers to himself as 'un juif-arabe qui a vécu [la] tragédie [du] conflit israélo-palestinien

[691] Moses and Rothberg, 'A Dialogue on the Ethics and Politics of Transcultural Memory', p. 36.
[692] Debrauwere-Miller, '"Neither Victims nor Executioners"', p. 82. See also p. 68.
[693] Rachel Nisselson, 'Exposing the Artificiality of Borders in Hubert Haddad's *Palestine*: Remembering That Which Binds Us', *French Review*, 86 (2013), 935-47 (p. 938).
[694] Shipler, *Arab and Jew* (2015), p. 19.

depuis l'enfance'.[695] Through *Palestine*, as one reviewer phrases it, 'Hubert Haddad, *juif arabe*, raconte l'aventure d'un Juif pris pour un Arabe'.[696] This reviewer goes on to write that *Palestine* is 'une histoire d'identité […] dans cette région où Juifs et Arabes s'entremêlent, s'entraiment et s'entre-tuent avec une inlassable constance' and that 'Haddad connaît bien les problèmes d'identité puisqu'il est lui-même *juif arabe*', emphasising the identity aspect.[697] Another reviewer puts it differently: '[c]e serait à lui [Hubert Haddad], *juif et arabe*, pacifiste, de chercher la justesse des mots et de cultiver la nuance qui manque aux débats'.[698] Yet being designated as 'juif et arabe' or even 'juif arabe' is not the same as self-defining as a 'juif-arabe'. Indeed, in this self-definition, Haddad recalls another Jewish Tunisian writer, namely Memmi, who wrote an essay entitled 'Qu'est-ce qu'un Juif-Arabe?', prompted by Gaddafi's call for Jews to return to Arab countries. The essay was originally published in the Jewish magazine *L'Arche*, and later included in Memmi's book *Juifs et Arabes* (seen as two separate though inseparable people groups).[699] In this essay, Memmi states that his reason for using the

[695] Haddad qtd. in Matar, '« A la croisée des chemins, il peut y avoir l'autre »', p. 513.
[696] Alexandra Schwartzbrod, 'Noirceur et lumière de « Palestine »', *Libération*, 18 October 2007, emphasis mine.
[697] *Ibid*.
[698] Valérie Marin La Meslée, 'Voix de Palestine', *Le Monde*, 1 November 2007, emphasis mine.
[699] Memmi, *Juifs et Arabes*, pp. 49-59.

term ‘Juif-Arabe’ was in order to emphasise ‘que natifs de ces pays dit Arabes, originaires de ces contrées bien avant l’arrivée des Arabes, nous en partageons, d’une manière non négligeable, les langues, les coutumes et les cultures’.[700]

Yet Memmi goes on to emphasise Muslim hostility towards Jews as opposed to the relative peaceful coexistence that existed between Jews and Muslims prior to French divide-and-rule colonialism: ‘Des *Juifs-Arabes*, nous aurions bien voulu l’être; si nous y avons renoncé, ce sont les Arabes musulmans qui nous en ont systématiquement empêchés, pendant des siècles, avec mépris et cruauté; et il est bien trop tard pour le redevenir’.[701] Zayzafoon writes that in this response, ‘Memmi constructs Arab-Jewish identity as an aberration, a political ploy invented by Arabs like Gaddafi to conceal the historical oppression of Jews in Arab lands for the purpose of delegitimizing the creation of Israel’.[702] Nevertheless, in the description of Memmi in the journal *Apulée: Revue annuelle de littérature et de réflexion*, of which Haddad is the founder and chief editor, it is written that ‘il [Memmi] aime se définir comme juif

[700] *Ibid*., p. 59, n. 2.
[701] Memmi, *Juifs et Arabes*, p. 50, original emphasis. For a detailed analysis of the various contradictions contained in this self-definition and its apparent repudiation, see Harrison, ‘Portrait of an Arab Jew: Albert Memmi and the Politics of Indigeneity’, in *Transcolonial Maghreb*, pp. 81-100.
[702] Zayzafoon, ‘When “L’Essence Arrose de Haine”’, p. 95.

arabe'.[703] When I asked him about this in my interview with him, Haddad defended his decision to describe Memmi in this way and indeed defended Memmi himself: 'La réponse de Memmi au dictateur sanguinaire Kadhafi est circonstancielle et ciblée. Les juifs arabes ont vécu longtemps dans une relative harmonie chez eux, au Maghreb'.[704] In my interview with him, Haddad echoed Memmi's sentiment of *partage*: 'Il y a eu des périodes où les Juifs d'orient […] se sont parfaitement accordés de leur arabité, ils partageaient la même culture, la même cuisine, la même langue que leurs frères musulmans'.[705] The idea of brotherhood between Jews and Muslims, as we saw in the previous chapter, goes back to the Biblical and Qur'anic stories of Isaac and Ishmael, both sons of the patriarch Abraham. In *Juifs et Arabes*, Memmi writes, in the context of Israeli-Palestinian conflict: 'le choc fratricide entre Juifs et Arabes, je le vis comme un accident historique, grave et très malheureux, mais non comme un insurmontable fatalité. Disons, pour employer un langage plus technique, comme un *conflit* et non comme une *contradiction*'.[706]

[703] 'Albert Memmi', *Apulée n°1 – Galaxies identitaires* (Paris: Zulma, 2016), p. 395. See also Catherine Pont-Humbert, 'Entretien avec Albert Memmi', *Apulée n°1 – Galaxies identitaires*, pp. 12-18.
[704] Haddad qtd. inVince, '"L'humain n'a pas de frontière"', p. 5.
[705] *Ibid*., p. 6.
[706] Memmi, *Juifs et Arabes*, p. 145, original emphasis.

Jews were sometimes conflated with Zionists in Tunisia, most acutely at the time of the Six-Day War, when many fled to France or Israel in the face of violent anti-Semitic demonstrations.[707] Others had left in 1956, when Tunisia gained independence, having not seen a future for themselves in the new republic, although some Jews were among those who had fought in the struggle against French colonial rule, including Memmi himself. Upon deeper reflection, although Memmi appears to have retracted in his essay on '*Juifs-Arabes*', his later clarification (if not redefinition) of what he meant by the term suggests he did not altogether renounce this self-definition: 'J'ai contribué à lancer il y a quelques années la formule: « Je suis un juif-arabe », qui a surpris et irrité; elle ne voulait rien dire de plus: nous sommes d'une même souche et nous partagerons dorénavant un destin'.[708] The term 'souche' (stump, descent, origin) is in opposition to the 'Français de souche' claim, and emphasises a shared Maghrebi indigeneity, a reference to the past which persists in the present ('nous sommes'). Meanwhile, the evocation of a common destiny to be shared looks to a possible future, in which Memmi envisages (Israeli) Jews and (Palestinian) Arabs living alongside one

[707] For an autobiographical account of this, see Colette Fellous, *Aujourd'hui* (Paris: Gallimard, 2005), particularly pp. 78-79, 85. See also Abdelkrim Allagui, *Juifs et musulmans en Tunisie: des origines à nos jours* (Paris: Tallandier, 2016), pp. 110-24.

[708] Albert Memmi, *Ce que je crois* (Paris: Bernard Grasset, 1985), p. 43.

another. This points to what Hochberg terms 'an Arab-Jewish future located beyond the limits of separatist imagination', which might be stretched to include the possibility of a Jewish-Palestinian future.[709]

In self-identifying as 'un juif-arabe',[710] Haddad takes a critical position towards both colonialism, with its divide-and-rule tactics, and Zionism for, as Shenhav writes, 'Arab Jews' is a 'joint category denied in standard Zionist language'.[711] Indeed, in my interview with him, Haddad drew a parallel between these two 'isms' while highlighting their difference in origin:

> Aujourd'hui, Israël se trouve dans une situation de guerre larvée permanente, avec un gouvernement d'extrême-droite qui mène une politique coloniale inadmissible, mais ce n'était pas à l'origine l'objectif du sionisme, ce n'était pas sa nature non plus. Il s'agissait paradoxalement de réfugiés, de migrants fuyant l'Europe génocidaire, pas de colons à la manière impérialiste, même si les conséquences peuvent sur certains points s'apparenter et même coïncider

[709] Hochberg, *In Spite of Partition*, p. 19, original emphasis.
[710] Haddad qtd. in Matar, '« A la croisée des chemins, il peut y avoir l'autre »', p. 513.
[711] Shenhav, *The Arab Jews*, p. 5. Shenhav and Hever argue that 'Zionist project [...] was founded on a sharp binary distinction between Arabs and Jews'. Shenhav and Hever, '"Arab Jews" After Structuralism', p. 105. See also Shohat, *Taboo Memories*, pp. 205-6; and Yonathan Mendel, 'Re-Arabizing the De-Arabized', pp. 94-116.

> du fait d'un état de guerre permanent
> qui verrouille toute situation.[712]

Haddad, therefore, sits among the growing number of Jewish intellectuals who are '[c]ritical of a Zionism [...] based more on European ideas of nationhood than the ethical concepts of Judaism', described by Roberts in *Contested Land, Contested Memory*.[713] At the same time, he cautions against collapsing even modern-day Zionism into colonialism, emphasising the different origins of each ideology, which themselves are far from monolithic.

In *Multidirectional Memory* and notably in the follow-up article 'From Gaza to Warsaw: Mapping Multidirectional Memory', Rothberg calls for 'an ethics of comparison that can distinguish between politically productive forms of memory from those that lead to competition, appropriation, or trivialization'.[714] The figurative map positions multidirectional memories 'at the intersection of an *axis of comparison* (defined by a continuum stretching from equation to differentiation) and an *axis of political affect* (defined by a continuum stretching from solidarity to competition – two complex, composite affects)'.[715] Rothberg argues that, particularly in the case of the Israeli-

[712] Haddad qtd. in Vince, '"L'humain n'a pas de frontière"', p. 8.
[713] Roberts, *Contested Land, Contested Memory*, p. 74.
[714] Rothberg, 'From Gaza to Warsaw', p. 525. See also Craps, *Postcolonial Witnessing*, pp. 83-88.
[715] Rothberg, 'From Gaza to Warsaw', p. 525.

Palestinian conflict, 'memory discourses expressing a differentiated solidarity offer a greater political potential than those [...] that subsume different histories under a logic of equation or that set victims against each other in an antagonistic logic of competition',[716] for example, claiming Palestinian genocide or a 'second holocaust' in Israel. In Memmi's preface to the French translation of Shipler's *Arab and Jew: Wounded Spirits in a Promised Land* (originally published in 1986), namely *L'Étoile et le croissant* (1988),[717] he similarly warns against 'équivalence, au détriment des faits'.[718] He goes on to write about the mobilisation of such charged terms and historical traumas as genocide and 'Holocaust':

> Est-il si décisif que les Palestiniens *croient* qu'ils subissent un génocide (si tant est qu'ils le croient vraiment), si cela ne concorde pas avec la vérité? Si quelques Israéliens, troublés par les sévices infligés aux Palestiniens (ce qui est à leur honneur), se souviennent de l'Holocauste? Tout de même, on ne peut comparer un camp palestinien et Auschwitz.[719]

Although he acknowledges that Palestinians might perceive or experience their

[716] *Ibid*., p. 526.
[717] David K. Shipler, *L'Étoile et le croissant*, trad. by Anita Portier (Paris: Presses de la cité, 1989).
[718] Memmi, 'Préface', in *L'Étoile et le croissant*, pp. I-III (p. I).
[719] *Ibid*., pp. I-II.

mistreatment and suffering as amounting to a genocide (and how Israelis may even be reminded of the Shoah in an unsettling way), he is reluctant to compare this to Jewish suffering in the past.

Haddad comes a step closer to adopting 'a vision of solidarity construed through differentiated similitude'[720] when he depicts the oppression of Palestinians in his novel. While Memmi maintains that comparisons are impossible, futile even, Haddad concedes that, although Israel's earlier settlers were mostly formed of refugees fleeing genocide, the subsequent illegal settlements and 'politique coloniale' at least *resemble* imperialism if they cannot be strictly defined as such. Said goes a step further than Haddad in his essay 'Bases for Coexistence' when he writes that 'unless the connection is made by which the Jewish tragedy is seen to have led directly to the Palestinian catastrophe by, let us call it "necessity" (rather than pure will), we cannot co-exist as two communities of detached and uncommunicatingly separate suffering'.[721] Haddad hints at this viewpoint in *Palestine* through the character of Falastìn who comes closest to adopting the oppressed-turned-oppressor narrative: 'les vieux aux commandes crèvent de peur et ne jurent que par la force. La plupart ont débarqué d'Europe ou d'ailleurs avec de méchants loups bruns à leurs trousses. Ils règlent leurs comptes à

[720] Rothberg, 'From Gaza to Warsaw', p. 528.
[721] Said, 'Bases for Coexistence', pp. 207-8.

travers nous. Nous sommes un peu leur miroir…' (*P*, p. 110).

Nevertheless, Haddad is careful to differentiate between being critical of contemporary right-wing Israeli politics and taking an anti-Israel stance, an accusation he received upon publication of his novel *Palestine*. In my interview with him, he stated,

> Je ne suis pas « anti-Israël », évidemment que je ne puis l'être à aucun moment, mais dès qu'on se refuse à prendre parti de manière violente et sectaire, on est accusé et par les uns et par les autres. Toutefois là-bas, des deux côtés du mur et des barbelés, beaucoup de gens de bonne volonté veulent sortir de cette impasse qu'est le manichéisme idéologique et guerrier.[722]

As Cheyette notes, 'the pressure to take sides in relation to Israel/Palestine is enormous even when the ingrained politics of the conflict has taken a malign form of radical Manichaeism ("fascists" versus "new Jews" or "Islamo-fascists" versus Israeli Jews) that imprisons thought'.[723] Similarly, Lionnet writes of 'the tragic doubleness of Manichean positions with their anxieties or phantasmatic

[722] Haddad qtd. in Vince, '"L'humain n'a pas de frontière"', pp. 9-10.
[723] Cheyette, 'Against Supersessionist Thinking', pp. 438-39.

otherings',[724] which is particularly evident in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. In my interview with him, Haddad admitted, '[c]'est aussi pour ça que j'ai écrit *Palestine*, roman résolument acquis à la cause du peuple palestinien dans ses droits fondamentaux, pour que l'on sorte du manichéisme, cette mécanique perverse de haine et d'ostracisme'.[725]

Here, Haddad recognises his position as an 'implicated subject' vis-à-vis the conflict, and takes this responsibility seriously. The aforementioned concept of 'implicated subjects' is the main focus of Rothberg's upcoming publication *The Implicated Subject: Beyond Victims and Perpetrators*, which is to include a chapter on the implication of Jewish diasporic subjects in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, particularly as the current Israeli government claims to speak on behalf of all Jews.[726] According to Rothberg, '[t]he category of implicated subject [...] describes the indirect responsibility of subjects situated at temporal or geographic distance from the production of social suffering'.[727] Rothberg states that '[t]he concept of implication asks

[724] Françoise Lionnet, 'Transnationalism, Postcolonialism or Transcolonialism? Reflections on Los Angeles, Geography, and the Uses of Theory', *Emergences*, 10 (2000), pp. 25-35 (p. 29).
[725] Haddad, interviewed by Vince.
[726] Michael Rothberg, *The Implicated Subject: Beyond Victims and Perpetrators* (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press), forthcoming. See also Rothberg, 'Trauma Theory, Implicated Subjects, and the Question of Israel/Palestine'.
[727] Rothberg, 'Michael Rothberg discussing "Multidirectional Memory and the Implicated Subject"'.

us to think how we are enmeshed in histories and actualities beyond our apparent and immediate reach, how we help produce history through impersonal participation rather than direct perpetration'.[728] Thus, through the act of writing, Haddad reflects on his position as an implicated (Arab-)Jewish subject in a geographically distant conflict, producing a different kind of *Histoire* in his novel *Palestine*.

Transformation and Separation

Previous readings of Haddad's *Palestine* have labelled its protagonist Cham an 'Arab-Jew', emphasising his Arabness in terms of language and physiology, as demonstrated in the way in which he calls for his mother in Arabic, and in his resemblance to the Arab Palestinian (absent) character Nessim, whose identity he comes to appropriate (*P*, pp. 12, 31, 148).[729] Although valid, these readings fail to consider the possibility of an additional Berber heritage. This is a hitherto unexplored example of the 'non-essentialist' or 'non-binary form of Arab-Jewish identity' advocated by Shenhav and Hever, a form which acknowledges that 'Mizrahi identity is not solely linked to Arab identity, but maintains with it ambivalent relations of

[728] *Ibid*.
[729] See Matar, '« A la croisée des chemins, il peut y avoir l'autre »', p. 518; and Nisselson, 'Exposing the Artificiality of Borders', p. 939.

closeness and distance at the same time'.[730] Debrauwere-Miller understandably confuses the Biblical names Cham (in English, Ham) and Sem (in English, Shem) in her argument that Cham-Nessim is 'the very allegory of the interchangeability of Jewish and Arab identities [...], uniting two "semites" in a common destiny'.[731] Cham's name points rather to the foundational myth which casts Berbers as the descendants of Ham (as opposed to Semites, considered descendants of Shem). In this way, Cham can be seen as 'un Berbère judaïsé et un Juif arabisé' (an extension of the author), and thus is not representative of the Israeli people, as Nisselson argues.[732] After exploring '[l]es légendes faisant des Berbères les descendants de peuples palestiniens' that have been propagated over the centuries, including the legend which attributes Berbers a Philistine (Palestinian) ancestry as supposed descendents of Goliath, Ayoun and Cohen conclude that '[l]es Berbères voient dans le judaïsme, dans la Palestine, une source possible, une histoire practicable'.[733] Thus, while Cham displays Arab characteristics, his name points to a Berber heritage also.

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[730] Shenhav and Hever, '"Arab Jews" After Structuralism', pp. 110, 114.

[731] Debrauwere-Miller, '"Neither Victims nor Executioners"', p. 83. See also p. 91, n. 75.

[732] Nisselson, 'Exposing the Artificiality of Borders', p. 935. The rest of her argument seems to somewhat contradict this claim.

[733] Ayoun and Cohen, *Les Juifs d'Algérie*, p. 40. See also Stora, *Les Trois exils*, p. 11.

Nessim, meanwhile, means 'breeze' in Arabic – originating, as Irene Siegel points out, from 'the Arabic root *n–s–m*' which also 'takes forms meaning "breath," "aura," or "living soul"' – and 'miracles' in Hebrew, 'invoking the tradition of Sephardic Jewish miracle tales where figures move magically between locations and times', as Cham-Nessim does in *Palestine*.[734] Moreover, Sham el Nessim is a spring festival celebrated in Egypt by Christians and Muslims alike, which coincides with the Christian celebration of the resurrection, commonly referred to as Easter. In an interview, Haddad speaks of the blurred lines between Arabs and Jews from North Africa and the Middle East in relation to Cham-Nessim's identity: 'Quant à *Palestine*, c'est qu'un israélien d'origine moyen-orientale ou maghrébine est un Palestinien, on [ne] fait pas la différence, moi je connais des Palestiniens, ils feraient de parfaits juifs tunisiens'.[735] Elsewhere, he claims that 'les Palestiniens et les Israéliens (surtout ceux venus d'Afrique et du Moyen-Orient: 500 000 [*sic*] juifs irakiens, et combien de centaines de milliers de berbères?), sont au fond identiques', with certain nuances but no fundamental differences.[736]

By drawing attention to Berber identity, it is not my intention to exclude the figure of

[734] Irene Siegel, 'A Judeo-Arab-Muslim Continuum: Edmond Amran El Maleh's Poetics of Fragments', *PMLA*, 132 (2017), 16-32 (p. 25).
[735] Haddad qtd. in Simonet, 'Hubert Haddad'.
[736] Haddad qtd. in Segal and Cartier, 'Entretien'.

the Semite from the discussion, both as a divider and as a potential unifier. As Anidjar demonstrates in *Semites: Race, Religion, Literature*, 'the proximity, the quasi-identity of Jew and Arab' has too often been ignored, by both Orientalists and so-called Orientals (whether Mizrahim or Arabs).[737] In my interview with him, Haddad drew attention to 'la dimension sémitique' as a common category for Jews and Arabs, in relation to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict in particular: '[l]es Israéliens, dont beaucoup viennent d'orient, doivent intégrer pleinement la dimension sémitique qu'ils partagent avec les Arabes, ou plus justement s'harmoniser au monde moyen-oriental qui les entoure'.[738] This call for integration of Arabness within Israeli identity is linked to its extension: harmony with surrounding Arab countries in the so-called Middle East. Significantly, in an interview, Said refers to the 'Oriental Jews [in Israel] [...] who are in fact Arabs'.[739] Drawing from Said, Massad write that '[t]o forget Semitism, to forget the Semites, we must always remember them'.[740] In his ironically titled essay 'Forget Semitism!', Massad points out that 'both Palestinians and Jews inhabit

[737] Anidjar, *Semites*, p. 32. See also Anidjar, *The Jew, the Arab*, p. 53.
[738] Haddad, interviewed by Vince.
[739] Edward Said qtd. in Cindi Katz, 'An Interview with Edward Said', *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space*, 2003 (21), 635-51 (p. 638).
[740] Massad, 'Forget Semitism!', in *Living Together: Jacques Derrida's Communities of Violence and Peace*, ed. by Elisabeth Weber (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), pp. 59-79 (p. 79).

the taxonomy "Semite"', thus the Palestinian Question and the Jewish Question are interlinked, if not one and the same; indeed, according to Massad, they merge into what he terms 'the Semitic Question'.[741] Here he draws from Said who writes in *Orientalism*:

> by an almost inescapable logic, I have found myself writing the history of a strange, secret sharer of Western anti-Semitism. That anti-Semitism and, as I have discussed in its Islamic branch, Orientalism resemble each other very closely is a historical, cultural and political truth that needs only to be mentioned to an Arab Palestinian for its irony to be perfectly understood.[742]

In an interview with *Diacritics*, preceding the publication of *Orientalism*, Said names Islam and 'Arabism' as 'subdivisions' of the field of Orientalism.[743] There is a sense here and in the above quotation that anti-Semitism in its Islamic branch, that is Orientalism, is what would now be called Islamophobia; indeed it could be said that anti-Semitism in its broadest sense encompasses anti-Jewish, anti-Arab, and anti-Arab Muslim racism.

In the interview with *Diacritics*, Said speaks of 'that part of history which shows how almost incredibly wide was the net used

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[741] Massad, 'Forget Semitism!', p. 61.
[742] Said, *Orientalism*, pp. 27-28. See also Kalmar and Penslar, 'Orientalism and the Jews: An Introduction', p. xv.
[743] Edward Said, 'Interview: Edward W. Said', *Diacritics*, 6 (1976), 30-47 (p. 45).

to gather in Orientals and Semites', stating that 'so far as Europe was concerned "the Semites" were not only the Jews but also the Muslims, and that the whole intellectual program devoted to proving Oriental (i.e. Semitic) degeneracy was practically effective in legitimating the colonial occupation of the entire Orient'.[744] Thus, Western anti-Semitism is linked not only to the Jewish Question but also to Orientalism, with its 'subdivisions' of Islam and 'Arabism', which contains its own subdivision of Arab Palestinians (as Orientals and Semites). Raz-Krakotzkin summarises Said's argument in *Orientalism* as follows:

> Said tried to show in his book the different ways in which "the Orient" was imagined, and the ways in which Western identity was envisioned as "rational," "enlightened," and "progressive" against *the Orient, and in particular the Arabo-Islamic one*, which was represented as an expression of "irrationality," "non-creativity," "violence," "laziness," or alternatively, as an expression of "exoticism," "rootedness," "authenticity" and so on.[745]

Here, Raz-Krakotzkin points out that there are multiple Orients or at least multiple branches of 'the Orient', the Arabo-Islamic one being Said's primary focus, yet this very

[744] *Ibid*., p. 42.
[745] Raz-Krakotzkin, 'Orientalism, Jewish Studies and Israeli Society', p. 238, emphasis mine.

Orientalism is a secret sharer of anti-Semitism which in its broadest sense encompasses racist depictions of the Arabo-Islamic world, even in conflating Arab with Muslim. In the interview with *Diacritics*, Said states that '[o]ne has the impression that every Orientalist has considered the Arabs as an exemplification of the Koran'.[746] Moreover, it is significant that Oriental and Semitic are presented as synonyms by Said, through the use of 'i.e'. Here, Said's assertion that 'I am an Oriental'[747] (i.e. a Semite) can be coupled with his assertion that 'I am a Jewish-Palestinian' (i.e. a Semite), to illustrate the mirroring aspect of anti-Semitism and Orientalism as secret sharers, the irony of which is 'perfectly understood', according to Said, by Arab Palestinians like himself.[748]

Drawing from the parallel Said makes between Western anti-Semitism and Orientalism, the latter 'a strange, secret sharer' of the former, Massad concludes that '[t]he Oriental and the Semite, the Orientalist and the anti-Semite, Orientalism and anti-Semitism are therefore second selves to one another, doubles, and mirror reflections that must always be read and seen in tandem'.[749] Massad points out that Said took the term 'secret sharer' from Joseph Conrad, who defined this as 'a second self', 'other self',

[746] Said, 'Interview: Edward W. Said', p. 45.
[747] *Ibid*., p. 47.
[748] See Said, *Orientalism*, pp. 27-28.
[749] Massad, 'Forget Semitism!', p. 62.

and 'double'.[750] By adding the adjective 'strange', Said emphasises the uncanny nature of this mirroring or shadowing. In October 2015, Franco-Turkish philosopher Robert Misrahi (whose very surname points to the 'Oriental' identity of Jews from Arab lands), featured alongside Zenatti on France 2's *Ce soir (ou jamais!)* debating the question 'Une nouvelle intifada s'est-elle déclarée en Israël?'. During the discussion, Misrahi called for reasoned debate and reciprocity (if not friendship) as opposed to irrational violence and distancing through enemy rhetoric. He proposed a mirror reflection or specular approach (as opposed to a speculative approach), which echoes Said's mirror metaphor, despite their differences in political position.[751]

In his recent article 'Against Supersessionist Thinking', Cheyette writes of 'different forms of dehumanization – orientalism, anti-Semitism, and Islamophobia', and in response Rothberg speaks of 'antisemitism, Islamophobia, and other forms of racism'.[752] Writing in the 1960s, Chouraqui recognises a similar phenomenon in *Lettre à un ami arabe*, as he groups together '[l]'antisémitisme et la

[750] *Ibid*.
[751] Robert Misrahi, 'Une nouvelle intifada s'est elle déclarée en Israël?', *Ce soir (ou jamais!)*.
[752] Cheyette, 'Against Supersessionist Thinking', p. 439. Michael Rothberg, 'For Activist Thought: A Response to Bryan Cheyette', *The Cambridge Journal of Postcolonial Literary Inquiry*, 4 (2017), pp. 1-8 (p. 8)

souffrance juive, le colonialisme et l'humiliation des peuples arabes'.[753] Addressing the Arab other/brother, referring specifically to the Shoah and colonialism, he notes through the first-person narrator Mattatias Mizrahi:

> [l]e colonialisme d'une part pour ce qui te concernait, et pour moi le nazisme, nous avait transformés tous les deux en des êtres marqués du sceau de l'infamie, en personnes marginales que la société vomissait. Nous comprenions enfin, dans notre sensibilité blessée, ce qui signifiait le mot « paria ».[754]

Having just written of 'l'antisémitisme chrétien', Chouraqui concludes, '[c]olonialisme, racisme: nous sentions que les racines du mal dont nous [Juifs et Arabes] souffrions étaient identiques, en cela aussi nous savions que nous étions frères', an idea reinforced by the metaphor of the seal.[755] Referring to the specifically French orientalism of the 1930s, Chouraqui writes:

> C'est à Paris, sous la double motion d'une haine et d'un amour, que nous prîmes conscience de nous-mêmes, de notre appartenance sémitique, toi, l'Arabe, moi, le Juif, tous deux des étrangers, même lorsque nous étions

[753] Chouraqui, *Lettre à un ami arabe*, p. 61.
[754] *Ibid*., p. 69.
[755] *Ibid*., p. 57.

> admis et aimés, parmi les peuples d'Occident.[756]

This love-hate relationship or double motion can be seen in the two predominant representations of both Orientalism and anti-Semitism, namely repulsion or degradation – what Said terms 'Oriental (i.e. Semitic) degeneracy' – and exoticisation or fetishisation, what Said terms 'Oriental sensuality' or 'Oriental splendour'.[757] Indeed, Chouraqui suggests that anti-Semitism encompasses racism against Jews and (Muslim) Arabs. Adopting the first-person narrative voice of a Palestinian Jew turned Israeli addressing a Palestinian Arab and fellow Jerusalemite, Chouraqui writes in *Lettre à un ami arabe*:

> Ce qu'ils [les Français] voulaient en moi n'était pas seulement la peau d'un Juif, mais l'âme même du sémite. Sémite, je l'étais aussi parce que, pendant des générations, mes parents comme les tiens avaient parlé une langue sémitique, l'arabe, et que, dès que mon peuple fit la redécouverte de ses racines bibliques, je me mis à parler moi aussi l'hébreu, une autre langue sémitique. Sémite, je l'etais à cause de mes ennemis, à cause de mes parents, à cause de moi-même et à cause de toi, mon ami arabe, avec lequel pendant des siècles j'ai cohabité dans des pays heureux.

[756] *Ibid*., p. 61.
[757] Said, 'Interview: Edward W. Said', pp. 42, 47.

> *Sémite, tu l'étais toi aussi, bien qu'appartenant à cette branche de la famille musulmane* où le Palestinien se distinguait, au sein du monde arabe, par sa plus grande ouverture au monde et sa plus haute culture. Sémites, nous l'étions par adoption et par vœu.[758]

The emphasis is on Semitic languages, but also filiation (through the Biblical roots of Jews, who share a common ancestor with Arabs through Abraham) and affiliation (through cohabitation with Arabs in Palestine and across the Arab world), as can be seen in the move from 'moi' (and 'mon peuple') to 'toi' and finally to 'nous'. Chouraqui uses the image of a family tree to illustrate how the overarching term Semite has a Jewish and Islamic branch, which can be linked to Said's assertion that Orientalism is the Islamic branch of anti-Semitism.

Berber, Semite, Oriental

In Haddad's *Palestine*, Cham's crossing-over from Israeli Berber/Arab Jew to the mirror figure of Arab Palestinian is a gradual process of transformation. As Delphine Descaves writes, '[t]otalement immergé dans la réalité palestinienne et comme frappé d'amnésie, Cham devient *progressivement* l'un d'eux et

[758] Chouraqui, *Lettre à un ami arabe*, p. 105, emphasis mine.

les repères autour de lui se brouillent'.[759] First he loses his wallet, complete with identity papers and family photographs, then he is kidnapped, disguised, and buried alive. He eventually emerges as a phantom-like being stripped of both identity and memory, which are intrinsically linked: 'Qui est-on, sans mémoire?' (*P*, p. 29). Displaced, his clothes replaced, and his watch removed, a blindfolded Cham '[en] état de choc' (*P*, p. 15) is transported across the West Bank, losing all 'repères' of situation in time and place.[760] Unbeknownst to him, the Israeli soldier is disguised as a Palestinian civilian: 'Cham découvre qu'on a subtilisé ses habits. Au lieu de l'uniforme militaire taché de sang, il porte un vieux pantalon de toile grise et une sorte de saharienne à manches longues' (*P*, p. 11). As part of this dressing up, '[o]n a couvert sa tête d'un keffieh' (*P*, p. 11), a key component of his identity transformation. The traditional male Arab headdress of the keffiyeh was popularised by former President of the Palestinian Authority Yasser Arafat and has since become a fashion symbol as well as a symbol of resistance and solidarity with Palestinians, typically worn around the neck as a scarf. Cham is initially dressed with the keffiyeh on his head, a sign of identification with the figure of the Palestinian. When he

[759] Delphine Descaves, 'Terres promises', *Le Matricule des anges*, September 2007, emphasis mine.
[760] Lebrun writes that, '[l]'homme sans repères va désormais vivre l'autre face de la guerre'. Lebrun, 'Une dérangeante fiction'.

emerges from the grave, the keffiyeh is on his shoulders, a sign of solidarity (*P*, p. 27).[761]

Haddad is careful not to label the kidnappers 'terrorists'; they are simply referred to as 'fedayins' (*P*, pp. 14, 20). According to *Le Petit Robert* dictionary, the word 'fedayin' signifies '[c]ombattant palestinien engagé dans des opérations de guérilla', and is derived from the Arabic 'fedaï', meaning 'celui qui se sacrifie'.[762] Moreover, Haddad does not associate the militant group with a specific faction:

> Ses kidnappeurs n'appartiennent pas au Hamas, ni au Jihad islamique. Peut-être un commando des Brigades des Martyrs al-Aqsa ou des Faucons du Fatah. Mais ces derniers opèrent plutôt dans la bande de Gaza. Ou encore un groupuscule armé dissident plus ou moins révolutionnaire comme il en existe des dizaines en Cisjordanie. Quelle différence pour lui, à vrai dire? Il ignore tout des multiples facteurs de combativité, de ressentiment ou de spéculation des uns et des autres (*P*, p. 15).

Here the narrator reveals the variety and complexity of combat groups in the West

[761] At the end of the novel, when the protagonist reassumes Israeli citizenship and travels on a settler bus, the keffiyeh almost gives away his appropriated Palestinian identity during a security check. He claims it is a souvenir, to which the female soldier responds, 'Une femme, alors!', seeing it as a 'foulard' or headscarf (*P*, p. 144).

[762] Definition of 'fedayin' in *Le Petit Robert de la langue française*, version numérique (Paris: Sejer, 2014).

Bank and Gaza, although this makes little difference for the disorientated protagonist whose main concern is to recover from his shoulder injury and ultimately to stay alive: 'La douleur va et vient, seule vraiment identifiable. Une chose lui semble avérée: on va se servir de lui ou l'abattre' (*P*, p. 15). The Palestinian militant group see Cham as an inconvenience – 'ce Juif n'existe pas; il ne sert plus à rien' – and thus decide to bury him alive in a colonial-style grave 'qu'on appelle le Tombeau du chrétien' (*P*, p. 20). In so doing, they strip him of his religious identity, his bloodline, and his memory: 'le gouffre a bu son sang et la mémoire [...]. Un froissement d'étincelle remplace la mémoire' (*P*, p. 24). As Ali Chibani writes, 'le soldat est symboliquement dépossédé de son « sang », de son appartenance filiale'.[763]

This symbolic death and resurrection, containing Christian allusions, is depicted as a definitive *coupure* with his former life and a moment of almost baptismal rebirth, suggested through the christening-like sprinkling of rain (*P*, p. 25), and reaching its fulfilment in his (re)christening as Nessim. Images of physical and metaphysical (re)creation are at once evoked in this transformation from death to life: 'La lame la plus fine tranche entre l'instant nouveau et

[763] Ali Chibani, 'Discontinuité territoriale et narrative dans *Palestine* d'Hubert Haddad', *La plume francophone*, 5 August 2014, <https://la-plume-francophone.com/2014/08/05/hubert-haddad-palestine-3/> [accessed 25 October 2016].

l'oubli sans fond. D'un coup le néant ravale les milliards d'années et recrache au hasard un soupir de résurrection' (*P*, p. 23). 'Maintenant que le masque a glissé' (p. 26), Cham is thus, as Marilyn Matar notes, 'vide de tout préjugé' and, as such, '[il] peut voir objectivement, tout en ressentant subjectivement, ce qui se passe de l'autre côté de la frontière'.[764] Adopted by Palestinian mother Asmahane and daughter Falastìn as their long-lost son and brother Nessim, whose identity papers and 'laissez-passer' he subsequently appropriates in a symbolic fulfilment of his christening, Cham's transformation into a Palestinian is complete (*P*, p. 45), and he becomes '[un] vague sosie de Nessim' (*P*, p. 55), an uncanny doppelganger. As Patrick Besson puts it, 'Cham est pris et, donc, se prend pour un Palestinien, Nessim'.[765] This is thanks to Asmahane and Falastìn, as Descarves points out: 'Soigné et protégé par elles, Cham est désormais de l'autre côté. Commence alors pour lui une étrange expérience, de dépersonnalisation ou plutôt de changement d'identité'.[766] This depersonalisation is followed by a repersonalisation as, in an out-of-body experience, Cham comes to embody Nessim, becoming another person. As Descaves notes,

[764] Matar, '« A la croisée des chemins, il peut y avoir l'autre »', p. 518.
[765] Patrick Besson, 'Le Roman israélo-palestinien d'Hubert Haddad', *Marianne*, 25 August 2007.
[766] Descaves, 'Terres promises'.

> Cette substitution est le prétexte romanesque qui permet à Hubert Haddad de souligner les ressemblances entre les deux peuples ennemis, et donc l'absurdité fondamentale de ce conflit, mais surtout, grâce à ce changement de point de vue subi par Cham, le romancier montre les violences quotidiennes qui déchirent Israéliens et Palestiniens; les humiliations et destructions régulières vécues par les Palestiniens…[767]

Adopting similar language of substitution with the enemy 'other', Debrauwere-Miller writes,

> [i]n the course of this identity substitution, Cham/Nessim will unwittingly penetrate the camp of the adversary (the Palestinians) and discover the barbarity exercised by their enemy (the Israelis). He undergoes the daily sufferings and tensions of an occupied West Bank, the reality of checkpoints lived on a daily basis, and the humiliation of a reviled identity.[768]

However, it is not until he experiences the demolition of the matriarchal home that Cham becomes 'corps et âme le fier Nessim', the 'living soul'[769] of the missing relative who fought peacefully for Palestinian rights (pp. 120-22), no longer a mere substitute.

[767] *Ibid*.
[768] Debrauwere-Miller, '"Neither Victims nor Executioners"', p. 75.
[769] Siegel, 'A Judeo-Arab-Muslim Continuum', p. 25.

Significantly, it is at this moment that Falastìn realises ‘qu’elle l’aimerait follement et à jamais au secret de l’inexpiable’, ‘son grand frère tant aimé’ (*P*, p. 122).

When pacifist Palestinian Abdallah Manastir receives Cham-Nessim into his home, he welcomes him in a fashion reminiscent of the parabolic prodigal son’s return: ‘C’est toi, le fils d’Asmahane, je te reconnais malgré le temps. Entre! Tout le monde te croyait mort’ (*P*, p. 64). The character transformation begins with Cham wearing Nessim’s clothes, complete with watch, and Falastìn repeating to him with an imploring look: ‘Nessim! Tu es Nessim! [...] Nessim! Nessim, mon grand frère, c’est toi!’ (*P*, p. 43). Attempting to convince herself as much as him, Falastìn wills it to be true, yet she is not fully convinced, as is later revealed in a troubling dream in which ‘[s]on frère’ Nessim is ‘traversti en soldat ennemi’ (*P*, p. 71). The verb ‘travestir’ suggests distorted reality as well as dressing up. At a checkpoint, Falastìn’s fears prove justified, as Cham-Nessim is suspected of being a Jew; ‘On a repéré un macchabée!’ the Jewish IDF soldiers ironically declare to the staff-sergeant (*P*, p. 116). Here, they are referring to the Jewish rebels known as the Maccabees who conquered Judea at the time of the Seleucid Empire, the ancient Jewish name for the West Bank area (including Hebron/al-Khalil) being Judea and Samaria, according to the Hebrew Bible.

Although unwittingly a Jew, it is from the position of Palestinian that Cham experiences the new world in which he finds himself, on 'the other side of the fence', or should that be wall? As Besson writes in his review of *Palestine* for the magazine *Marianne*, '[l]'Israélien Cham se prend pour un Palestinien et voit de près ce qu'il y a *de l'autre côté du mur*'.[770] In 1994, following a suicide attack in Tel Aviv, the then prime minister of Israel, Yitzhak Rabin, who was influential in the Oslo Accords, stated that '[w]e have to decide on separation as a philosophy'.[771] Following Rabin's assassination, Prime Minister Ehud Barak put a different spin on things by stating that 'a physical separation […] [was] essential to the Palestinian nation in order to foster its national identity and independence, without being dependent on the state of Israel'.[772] As Said noted in 1999, 'Barak's logic of separation […] [was] ironically matched by a Palestinian desire to exist separated from Israel […] in a utopian land without an obstructive Jewish-Israeli presence'.[773] In April 2002, following hundreds of terrorist attacks during the Second Intifada, Ariel Sharon's government decided to build a

[770] Besson, 'Le Roman israélo-palestinien d'Hubert Haddad', emphasis mine.
[771] Haddad, 'Le Sentiment du monde'.
[772] Ehud Barak qtd. in David Makovsky, 'How to Build a Fence', *Foreign Affairs*, 83 (2004), 50-64.
[773] Edward Said, 'What can separation mean?', *Al-Ahram Weekly*, 11 November 1999, <http://weekly.ahram.org.eg/Archive/1999/455/op2.htm > [accessed 19 April 2018] (para 2 of 5).

'security fence' or 'separation wall' along or near the Green Line (that is, the 1949 armistice line) and the *frontière* established in 1967.[774]

In French, there are various terms used when referring to the separation barrier. On the one hand, there is 'clôture de sécurité', 'barrière de séparation', 'barrière antiterroriste', and on the other 'mur de l'apartheid', 'mur de la ségrégation', 'mur d'annexion'.[775] It is clear that these terms belong to separate narratives: the first seeing the conflict in terms of terrorism, defence, security and what Rabin called the philosophy of separation, referring to a barrier or enclosing/closing-off fence; and the second in terms of apartheid, segregation and annexation, connoting neo-colonialism and referring to a wall. The first can be read in terms of justification and the second in terms of injustice equating the separation barrier with South African apartheid and imperialist land grabbing. Interestingly, in Haddad's novel, it is the somewhat caricatured Islamist extremist Omar who uses the term 'bantoustan' in reference to the West Bank, equating it with the territory set apart for the black population of South Africa under the

[774] It is worth noting that in French the word *frontière* can be used to designate both boundary line and border zone.

[775] See 'La Construction du mur: de la protection à la séparation', *La Documentation française*, 13 August 2008, <http://www.ladocumentationfrancaise.fr/dossiers/israel-60-ans/construction-mur.shtml> [accessed 4 October 2016].

apartheid regime (*P*, p. 89), suggesting this is an extreme view.[776]

The narrator in *Palestine* first writes of 'la clôture de protection' (*P*, p. 7) and then of a '« mur »' (*P*, p. 10), though notably this is in inverted commas. The latter term is repeated in the direct speech of the Palestinian doctor who treats Cham-Nessim later in the narrative, without inverted commas (*P*, p. 30). The narrator later speaks of 'la ligne de séparation' (*P*, p. 103), which denotes division and recalls the arbitrary lines drawn by the French and British during the mandate period.[777] The next reference involves an oxymoronic mixing of narratives in the designation 'mur de sécurité' (*P*, p. 140). Taking the concept of the wall from the predominant Palestinian narrative, the narrator combines this with the need for security, a central component of the predominant Israeli narrative. The final two references to this infrastructure emphasise its concrete, wall-like features: 'mur de béton' (*P*, p. 144) and 'la ceinture de béton' (*P*, p. 146). Thus the narrative begins with an Israeli perspective and gradually adopts a Palestinian one, following the protagonist's transformative journey. In this way, Cham can be seen to 'cross the line of separation'

[776] See Laurent Zecchini, 'Le "bantoustan" de Palestine', *Le Monde*, 19 December 2012, <http://www.lemonde.fr/idees/article/2012/12/19/le-bantoustan-de-palestine_1808273_3232.html> [accessed 4 October 2016].
[777] See Barr, *A Line in the Sand*.

between Jews and Arabs, Israelis and Palestinians.[778]

In 'Israel-Palestine: A Third Way', Said writes (in what he identifies as 'the wake of an embalmed, and dead Oslo, and an equally dead rejectionism') that 'our battle is for democracy and equal rights, for a secular commonwealth or state in which all the members are equal *citizens*, in which the concept underlying our goal is a secular notion of citizenship and belonging'.[779] In Haddad's *Palestine*, the 'real' Nessim, Falastìn's long-lost brother, is depicted as an optimist of communist persuasion, and a supporter of a binational state:

> il affichait une foi entière pour le processus de paix et prônait l'instauration d'un État binational, sur les positions de l'ancien parti communiste: une société indivisible avec les mêmes droits partagés, à l'encontre des libéraux au pouvoir, des colons et des dictatures arabes (*P*, p. 40).

These words echo those of Said, though without his disillusionment over the peace process, and with a communist underpinning. Meanwhile, the character of Manastir, a pacifist Palestinian, puts forward a two-state solution. He speaks about the need to be

[778] Edward Said, 'Israel-Palestine: A Third Way', *Le Monde diplomatique*, 7 September 1998, <https://mondediplo.com/1998/09/04said> [accessed 6 December 2016] (para 4 of 19).
[779] *Ibid*. (para 17 of 19), original emphasis.

patient, to fight on the front of opinion, local politics, and diplomacy, turning aside from suicide attacks and armed intifada, in order to reach the objective of a state in the West Bank and the Gaza strip demarcated by the Green Line, with a real solution to the refugee problem, total evacuation of the settlements (or 'colonies' to translate fully the French term), and Jerusalem as a shared capital under international law (*P*, p. 67). This character's vision comes closest to Haddad's own: 'Jérusalem, il faut la départager, c'est-à-dire la partager sans frontières, qu'il y ait deux États et puis qu'il y ait une ville commune ouverte sur le monde, avec une administration conjointe'.[780] Although their visions of the future differ, both Manastir and Nessim belong to 'ceux qui pensent que le pays, à moyen et long terme, aurait davantage besoin de cadres intellectuels que militaires ou politiques' (*P*, p. 40).

Orientalism and Occidentalism

According to Said, read in Orientalist terms, the Israeli-Palestinian conflict (of which the Israel/West Bank issue is a microcosm) is reduced to 'the simple-minded dichotomy of freedom-loving, democratic Israel and evil, totalitarian, and terroristic Arabs'.[781] When

[780] Haddad, interviewed by Vince.
[781] Edward Said, *Culture and Imperialism* (London: Chatto & Windus, 1993), p. 27.

the Israeli-Palestinian conflict is read in a particularly Occidentalist way, this dichotomy is arguably turned on its head and is therefore similarly (though not equally) over-simplistic. As Said himself says, 'the answer to Orientalism is not Occidentalism'.[782] What Haddad's *Palestine* suggests, meanwhile, is that both freedom-loving and extremist positions are taken on both sides. In a similar vein and drawing from Said, Cheyette calls 'for Jews and Palestinians to be treated as fully rounded human beings [...] and for a perception of Israel/Palestinian as not just a pariah-making one-sided crime but as a tragic all too human conflict'.[783]

In contemporary discourse, it has become an assumption among many scholars of the so-called Middle East that Zionism is essentially an orientalist endeavour, which in some cases is arguably an occidentalist move, equating Zionism with western imperialism. This is particularly the case for those who argue that Zionism is a form of (neo-)colonialism and ethnic cleansing of indigenous Palestinians, often by those who self-identify as 'anti-Zionists', including many self-ascribing 'Arab-Jews'. Though careful not to conflate the two, Mendel creates a link between 'the Orientalist approach', which maintained 'the "natural" differentiation between "Jews" and "Arabs"' (forming part of

[782] Said, *Orientalism*, p. 328.
[783] Cheyette, 'Against Supersessionist Thinking', p. 439.

colonialist divide-and-rule tactics, notably in Algeria), and the 'denial of Arab-Jewish identity within the Zionist movement'.[784] Indeed, it would appear that a specifically Ashkenazi form of Zionism orientalised Jews from Arab countries. Hochberg writes that 'for Arab Jews, if they wish to be integrated into the new Jewish national collectivity, they are required to first rid themselves of their Oriental part, that is, their "Arabness"',[785] as seen in Zenatti's *Mensonges*. Hochberg argues that, according to 'Zionism', Jews from Arab countries were to be neither 'too Arab' nor 'too Jewish'.[786] Yet perhaps it is more accurate to say that it was their brand of Zionism (religious, 'oriental', 'backward') which was discouraged by the dominant Zionist movement (secular, socialist, European, forward-looking). In other words, they were not to be 'too Zionist'. Speaking for 'nous, Juifs arabes', Memmi writes, '[n]ous conspirions pour l'édification d'un État juif dès l'âge de douze ans [l'âge de bar mitzvah], bien avant les souffrances des Juifs européens'.[787]

Indeed, the Zionism of Jews from Arab countries was often a specifically religious one, a Biblical 'aliyah' (going up to Zion/Jerusalem) and fulfilment of prophecy. As Chouraqui notes in *Lettre à un ami arabe*,

[784] Mendel, 'Re-Arabizing the De-Arabized', p. 106.
[785] Hochberg, *In Spite of Partition*, p. 10.
[786] See Hochberg, 'Too Jewish and Too Arab *or* Who is the (Israeli) Subject?', in *In Spite of Partition*, pp. 94-115.
[787] Memmi, *Juifs et Arabes*, p. 12.

'[l]es Juifs du Maroc ou de Perse, d'Algérie ou du Yémen, pendant des siècles, situaient leur capital spirituelle à Jérusalem'.[788] This was summarised in the exhortation, as Haddad puts it, '[l]'an prochain à Jérusalem, ou bien à la Palestine', as the land was often referred to as Palestine before the State of Israel was founded.[789] Haddad further contextualises as follows: 'Palestine, c'est le nom que tout le monde avait aux lèvres, même les Juifs'.[790] Haddad revealed in our interview that, even after the foundation of Israel, his Algerian grandmother Baya 'n'avait pas intériorisé qu'Israël existait, pour elle, c'était la Palestine, et puis c'était avec une émotion folle parce que la Palestine invoquait pour elle la terre promise'.[791] There was also an Arab-Jewish form of secular Zionism advocated by Palestinian Jews and other Mizrahi Jews, characterised by sympathy towards the indigenous Arab population of British Mandate Palestine and the desire for Arab-Jewish peaceful coexistence as experienced over the centuries throughout the Arab world.[792] This is just one example of how

[788] Chouraqui, *Lettre à un ami arabe*, p. 28.
[789] Haddad, interviewed by Vince.
[790] *Ibid*.
[791] *Ibid*. In a review which appeared in *Le Monde* and includes qutations from Haddad, Marin La Meslée writes, 'Dans son enfance, Baya, sa grand-mère algérienne, verse des larmes en prononçant le nom d'un pays perdu. « *J'imaginais cette Palestine* des oliviers et des villes saintes comme le lieu mythique des retrouvailles où Baya ne pleurait plus. »'. Marin La Meslée, 'Voix de Palestine'.
[792] For example, A. S. Yahuda and Élie Gozlan. See Saeko Yazaki, 'Muslim-Jewish relations in the Duties of Hearts: A. S. Yahuda and his study of Judaism', in

Zionism is often occidentalised, whereby the Israeli Jew is cast as European and the Arab as Oriental; another is how Israel is depicted as the Switzerland of the Middle East, and this can be seen as a form of self-occidentalism in some cases.

Before the term 'Occidentalism' was coined, Syrian philosopher and activist Sadik Jamal Al-Azm warned against falling into 'the trap of "Orientalism in reverse"', which works on the same principle.[793] Al-Azm identifies several problems resulting from the so-called 'science of Occidentalism', notably its 'politics of resentment and [...] barely camouflaged sense of inferiority in which occidentalism is supposed to do to the West what orientalism has done to us Easterners', and the way in which it 'confirms all over again the much-derided and disparaged "essentialism" of the original project by reifying (and at times even fetishizing) anew

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Muslim-Jewish Relations in Past and Present: A Kaleidoscopic View, ed. by Josef Meri (Leiden; Boston; Tokyo: Brill, 2017), pp. 137-61; and Yuval Evri and Almog Behar, 'Between East and West: Controversies Over the Modernization of Hebrew Culture in the Works of Shaul Abdallah Yosef and Ariel Bension', *Journal of Modern Jewish Studies*, 16 (2017), 295-311. See also Stora, *Les Trois exils*, p. 67-70.

[793] Sadik Jalal Al-Azm, 'Orientalism, Occidentalism, and Islamism: Keynote Address to "Orientalism and Fundamentalism in Islamic and Judaic Critique: A Conference Honoring Sadik Al-Azm"', *Comparative Studies of South Asia, Africa and the Middle East*, 30 (2010), 6-13 (p. 6). See Sadik Jalal Al-Azm, 'Orientalism and Orientalism in Reverse', in *Orientalism: A Reader*, ed. by Alexander Lyon Macfie (New York: New York University Press, 2000), pp. 217-38 (first publ. in *Khamsin* 8 (1981), 5-26).

"Orient" and "Occident"'.[794] A specifically Islamist Occidentalism calls for 'external grand jihad [here understood as holy war] against the globally unholy alliance of Western Crusaderism with world Jewism, Zionism, and Israelism'.[795] It is important to note how the latter four are grouped together as allied ideologies through the use of 'ism', collapsing religion, conquest, ethnicity, nationalism, and nationhood. The character Omar in Haddad's *Palestine* embodies this spirit when he declares: 'Crois-moi, nous allons bientôt relancer la guerre totale contre l'impérialisme sioniste et ses foutus alliés' (*P*, p. 133). This Occidentalist Islamism, according to Algerian sociologist Abdelghani Nait Brahim, 'tends to represent the "West", the *other*, only as depraved, materialistic and exploitative'.[796]

Al-Azm argues that there are two forms of Islamism: Arab nationalism and Islamic revivalism (or 'the Islamanic trend' of what is known as 'popular political Islam').[797] He concludes that, 'Ontological Orientalism in Reverse is, in the end, no less reactionary, mystifying, ahistorical and antihuman than Ontological Orientalism proper'.[798] In a way which is not too dissimilar, Ian Buruma and

[794] Al-Azm, 'Orientalism, Occidentalism, and Islamism', p. 7.
[795] *Ibid*., p. 13.
[796] Abdelghani Nait Brahim, 'Identifying Alterity and Altering Identity', *Mediterranean Journal of Social Sciences*, 2 (2011), 5-33 (p. 11).
[797] See Al-Azm, 'Orientalism and Orientalism in Reverse', p. 234.
[798] *Ibid*., p. 237.

Avishai Margalit argue in their provocative book that Occidentalism, which they define as 'the dehumanizing picture of the West painted by its enemies' is 'at least as reductive' as Orientalism and a form of 'bigotry [which] simply turns the Orientalist view upside down'.[799] However, this over-simplified reading suggests equation and fails to take into account power play and disproportionality. Massad in particular takes issue with this view, accusing Buruma and Avishai of '[m]istaking Occidentalism as the hatred of the Occident'.[800] In his article 'Orientalism as Occidentalism', Massad writes that 'Orientalism has not been seen or depicted by Said or any other scholar as a "loathing" of the Orient or everything Oriental, nor has Orientalism been reduced to the view that it is "the Orient as seen by its enemies" as Buruma and Margalit's book's subtitle asserts'.[801] Similarly, Zahia Smail Salhi writes that 'Buruma and Margalit's views are rather simplistic in the way they position Orient and Occident as born enemies'.[802] Nevertheless, she claims that,

[799] Ian Buruma and Avishai Margalit, *Occidentalism: A Short History of Anti-Westernism* (London: Atlantic Books, 2004), pp. 5, 10.

[800] Joseph Massad, 'Orientalism as Occidentalism', *History of the Present*, 5 (2015), 83-94 (p. 91).

[801] Massad rather sees Occidentalism as 'the becoming-West of Europe', adopting Couze Venn's phrasing. See Massad, 'Orientalism as Occidentalism', p. 93, n. 34. Note the difference in the subtitle of Buruma and Margalit's book in the UK and US publications: 'A Short History of Anti-Westernism' and 'The West in the Eyes of its Enemies', respectively.

[802] Zahia Smail Salhi, 'The Maghreb and the Occident: Towards the Construction of an Occidentalist

although not equivalent or even necessarily antagonistic, '[b]oth Orient and Occident essentialize the other', arguing that 'this condition can only be altered by changing the existing state of affairs in which Orient and Occident are placed apart with a set of binaries attached to them which [...] separate these two worlds from each other'.[803]

Orientalism and Occidentalism, then, although not equal, are nevertheless similar. As Nait Brahim notes, they both '[focus] on difference, […] identifying people for the sake of categorisation, exclusion, and stigmatisation of the *other*', establishing 'virtual frontiers of isolation based on subjective criteria'.[804] There are a couple of things to note here in relation to Haddad's *Palestine*. Firstly, what Haddad's text demonstrates is that Israeli citizens are not just comprised of European Westerners as the Occidentalist worldview would have it, but rather a plethora of Jewish North Africans, Ethiopians, and Middle Easterners, alongside Eastern Europeans and Western Europeans, as well as Arabs (including Muslims and Christians). Moreover, in Haddad's *Palestine*, a distinction is made between Westerners and 'internationaux' (*P*, p. 98). While the former

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Discourse', in *Orientalism Revisited: Art, Land and Voyage*, pp. 255-79 (p. 268).

[803] Salhi, 'The Maghreb and the Occident', p. 266. See also Daniel Martin Varisco, *Reading Orientalism: Said and the Unsaid* (Seattle; London: University of Washington Press, 2007), pp. 263-66, 300-4.

[804] Nait Brahim, 'Identifying Alterity and Altering Identity', p. 12.

are Occidentalised as inherently capitalist and immoral, the latter are seen as '[d]es espèces de touristes missionaires' (*P*, p. 98), with an intriguing hint of the neo-colonial. In other words, these are people who see themselves as being on a mission or giving aid, but do little to facilitate life for Palestinians on the ground, failing to check where the money is going, with the risk of it falling into the wrong hands. The idea of (volun)tourism is also linked to colonialism, specifically to anthropology, the concept of adventure, exploration, and discovery of the other (photographed, observed, pitied). In Haddad's *Palestine*, a Palestinian beggar named Mo'ah suggests that the motivation of these so-called internationals is more a hatred of Zionists than a concern for the wellbeing of Palestinians on the ground. Elsewhere, the novel is more complimentary of the efforts of local pacifist networks to bring peace to the region.

An extreme example of a specific kind of Occidentalism can be seen in the words of Islamist extremist Omar who says to Cham-Nessim that 'l'holocauste est une mystification des traîtres occidentaux pour s'accaparer nos terres, je l'ai appris à l'école coranique' (*P*, p. 91). For Omar, the two strips of blue on the Israeli flag, recalling the Jewish prayer shawl, indicate that '[c]es chiens veulent s'étendre du Nil à l'Euphrate! Mais nous les jetterons tous à la mer…' (*P*, p. 91). Omar claims that the military occupation protects the settlers who dream of

exterminating them; only Jihad, he argues, will save the Palestinians from these Zionist settlers (*P*, p. 69). At one point in the text, Omar says that as a child he saw his father beaten to death by soldiers who entered his home (*P*, p. 69). He is therefore driven by a combination of hatred and revenge stemming from childhood trauma, yet his justification is decidedly an Islamist one. Indeed, he concludes that '[l]e *shahid* se purifie dans le sang de ses ennemis...' (p. 91). 'Shahid' derives from the Arabic for witness but is also used to denote martyr, thus this witness of the murder of the father turns to martyrdom. Meanwhile, Falastìn, who is similarly traumatised by the brutal assassination of her father, turns to peaceful activism and has recourse to both Biblical and Qur'anic verses. Omar frequently quotes the Qur'an and uses this to justify his fundamentalist and violent worldview, claiming that the more Zionists killed, the faster the journey to paradise (*P*, p. 91). The pacifist Palestinian Manastir gives another perspective: 'J'ai lu moi aussi le Coran', he says, and goes on to quote the ninth Surah: 'Et si l'un des sectateurs te demande asile, accorde-le lui, afin qu'il entende la parole divine, puis conduis-le en un lieu de sécurité. Car ces gens-là ne savent pas' (*P*, p. 69). Manastir also argues, somewhat controversially, that it is Islamist terrorism which is responsible for what he terms 'le mur' and the dividing up of territories (*P*, p. 69). 'Nous devons lutter sans haine pour notre

indépendance', he concludes, employing pacifist anti-colonial rhetoric (*P*, p. 69).

If Orientalism is the thesis, and Occidentalism the unequal antithesis, then what might a possible synthesis be? Nait Brahim would suggest secularisation and intercultural encounter. Advocating scientific discourse over ideological discourse,[805] he concludes that 'acknowledging diversity is admitting the possibility of cooperation and peaceful coexistence that may cross not only geographical frontiers, but also symbolic ones, such as religion and culture'.[806] This recalls Said's words written before the establishment of the separation barrier:

> I see no other way than to begin now to speak about sharing the land that has thrust us together, sharing it in a truly democratic way, with equal rights for each citizen. There can be no reconciliation unless both peoples, two communities of suffering, resolve that their existence is a secular fact, and that it has to be dealt with as such. […] We must now begin to

[805] 'Scientific discourse, by pointing at the share of ideology in the making of representations, and not by denying its participation, admits, contrary to what is assumed by ideological discourse, that alterity is an integral part of identity inasmuch as the latter is actually made up of two permanently contradictory processes: self-identification or assimilation, which allows the individual to feel he belongs to a group; *identisation* (Tap, 1980), "by which an individual distances himself from the other and considers himself as distinct from him" (Camilleri, 1980: 331), i.e. his understanding of alterity'. Nait Brahim, 'Identifying Alterity and Altering Identity', p. 12.

[806] Nait Brahim, 'Identifying Alterity and Altering Identity', p. 12.

> think in terms of coexistence, after separation, in spite of partition.[807]

What Said suggests is that, even during separation, now embodied in the geographical frontier of the so-called 'separation barrier', frontiers of difference can be transcended in order to reach the ultimate goal of peaceful coexistence. This is Falastìn's aspiration in Haddad's *Palestine*: 'Un jour, la paix viendra et nous pourrons tous nous aimer [...]. Oui, c'est seulement par la paix que nous pourrons vaincre…' (*P*, p. 109).

Moreover, symbolic as well as geographical frontiers are crossed in the literary space of Haddad's *Palestine*. The protagonist goes from Israeli Jew to Arab Palestinian as he crosses from Israel into the West Bank and then back again. The key to his identity can be found in a conversation he has with the young Palestinian beggar Mo'ah, who somewhat paradoxically takes pity on the disorientated Cham-Nessim, mistaking him for an impoverished refugee from one of the numerous Palestinian refugee camps to be found in the West Bank (*P*, p. 97). As he shares the beggar's lunch, Cham-Nessim recalls a Hebraic proverb: '*lekh lekha*, "va vers toi-même"' (*P*, p. 98). The Palestinian beggar says to Cham-Nessim, 'Si je ne m'occupe pas de moi, qui s'en chargera?', to which Cham-Nessim internally responds, '*[e]t si je m'occupe que de moi, qui suis-je?*' (*P*, p.

[807] Said, 'The One-State Solution' (para 18 of 29).

99). This recalls the words of Sufi poet Émir Abdelkader Aljazaïri, often quoted by Haddad: 'Qui suis-je si je ne suis pas toi? Qui est-tu, si tu n'étais pas moi?'.[808] By its fictional nature, Haddad's novel provides a space in which empathetic alterity is possible as the (Berber-)Jewish-(Arab-)Palestinian character Cham-Nessim 'attempt[s] to understand the *other* by putting himself in his place', to use Nait Brahim's terminology.[809] This sense of altruism and internal alterity, of the other within the self, permeates his being and is in keeping with Falastìn's dream of what Nait Brahim terms 'peaceful coexistence', which Said notes can only be based on recognition of the other's history alongside one's own: '[w]e must think our histories together, however difficult that may be, in order for there to be a common future', based upon 'real coexistence between the peoples whose share of historical sufferings links them inextricably'.[810]

Reciprocity and Rupture

As Matar notes, '[l]e titre « Palestine » ne se réfère pas uniquement à la terre, mais

[808] See Émir Abdelkader Aljazaïri, *Trois poèmes soufis*, trad. by Abed Azrié, in *Apulée n°1 – Galaxies identitaires*, pp. 169-70.
[809] Nait Brahim, 'Identifying Alterity and Altering Identity', p. 25. See also Nisselson, 'Exposing the Artificiality of Borders', pp. 941-45.
[810] Said qtd. in Hochberg, 'Edward Said: "The Last Jewish Intellectual"', p. 52.

également au personnage allégorique de Falastin [*sic*] (Palestine en arabe), allégorie de la terre et de la paix, amante, sœur, et surtout âme-sœur de Cham-Nessim, donc, son autre lui-même'.[811] Indeed, the character of Falastìn is described in the novel as 'proche de la terre' (*P*, p. 63). Haddad elaborated on this in my interview with him, putting a particular emphasis on the specific spelling of the character's name:

> Falastìn signifie Palestine, déclinaison étymologique du mot Philistin. C'est aussi cette histoire entre Falastìn et Cham qui fait le roman, sinon ce livre n'aurait été qu'une sorte de document ou d'essai. Le roman existe parce qu'il y a tout d'un coup cette altérité amoureuse entre Cham, le soldat israélien blessé, devenu amnésique, et cette jeune femme qui est d'une certaine manière la première personne connue, qui est absolue et qui symbolise au fond toute cette lutte pour l'indépendance, de la manière la plus intelligente et humaine.[812]

Traumatised by the murder of her father by the Israeli army (*P*, pp. 35-36) – 'il avait été tué par erreur, exécuté sur une route lumineuse entre Ramallah et Bethléem' (*P*, p. 77) – Falastìn is left in a state of disillusionment and emotional detachment, 'avec une désinvolture alerte, presque

[811] Matar, '« A la croisée des chemins, il peut y avoir l'autre »', p. 519.
[812] Haddad, interviewed by Vince.

inhumaine' (*P*, p. 39). The pacifist Manastir remembers Falastìn's father as 'plein de bon sens, courageux, un authentique héros', concluding that '[i]l était contre le terrorisme, [mais] ça ne l'a pas empêché d'être abattu' (*P*, p. 64). Falastìn continues her father's legacy of peace activism and pacifism – '[l]'héritage d'un père libre-penseur, érudit et patriote' – in her voluntary work with Palestinian children, international groups, 'des pacifistes israéliens', and the political party Hadash (*P*, pp. 40, 43, 47, 67, 110). There are specific initiatives referred to in the novel, for example Ta'ayush, meaning 'living together' in Arabic, a grassroots solidarity movement which seeks to eradicate racism, to construct 'a true Arab-Jewish partnership', and 'to achieve full civil equality through daily non-violent direct-action'.[813]

In one of her flashbacks, Falastìn recalls how, in the aftermath of her father's murder, '[i]l n'y avait plus ni père ni ennemis', and even in her 'incomprehension face à l'occupant abusif et acharné dans sa rancune' and the sense of injustice this brings, 'elle ne saurait haïr quiconque sans trahir les absents' (*P*, p. 40). She thus feels a sense of responsibility to continue the work of her pacifist father and brother in promoting peace, as opposed to breeding hatred and contemplating revenge. However, she is

[813] See 'Ta'ayush', <http://www.taayush.org/> [accessed 19 December 2016]; and 'About Ta'ayush', <http://www.taayush.org/?page_id=61> [accessed 19 December 2016].

prevented from continuing her law studies in Hebron, a contested city, and thus from following fully in the footsteps of her lawyer father, due to travel restrictions enforced by the IDF in the West Bank: 'Il faut des heures pour franchir les barrages, je ne pourrais plus rentrer' (*P*, p. 37).

Shipler writes that Hebron is a 'junction of Islam and Judaism, [...] one even more intimate than Jerusalem, for here is where the prophet Abraham, revered by both Jews and Muslims, is believed to have been entombed with his wife Sarah'.[814] Biblically speaking, 'the name of Hebron before was Kirjath-Arba' (Joshua 14:15). A contemporary illegal settlement there has adopted Kiryat Arba as its name. Shipler writes that, '[t]oday the settlement, bearing the Biblical name Kiryat Arba, is a satellite city and a center of Jewish extremism'.[815] There are various *histoires* connected to the site or knot of memory (*nœud de mémoire*)[816] embodied in Abraham's supposed tomb which, in the words of Derrida, is 'a place held in common and symbolic trench of the religions called "Abrahamic"'.[817] Founded after the Six-Day

[814] Shipler, *Arab and Jew* (2015), p. 130. See Genesis 23.
[815] Shipler, *Arab and Jew* (2015), p. 131.
[816] Rothberg coined the term '*nœuds de mémoire*' which he defines as 'a new model […] of remembrance', reaching 'beyond the framework of the imagined community of the nation-state' and thus a 're-thinking' of Nora's Franco-centric *lieux de mémoire*. Rothberg, 'Introduction: Between Memory and Memory', p. 7.
[817] Derrida qtd. in Massad, 'Forget Semitism!', pp. 77-79.

War, which saw Israel claim annexation of East Jerusalem and occupation of the West Bank, Kiryat Arba is a collision of ancient Biblical heritage and modern-day suburban (illegal) settlement, as indicated by 'la nouvelle route privée reliant l'ensemble suburbain de Kiryat Arba, du nom antique d'Hébron, la Ville des Quatre' (*P*, p. 71). In *Palestine*, Haddad translates Kiryat Arba as 'la Ville des Quatre', which may refer either to the four couples allegedly buried there (namely Abraham and Sarah, Isaac and Rebekah, Jacob and Leah, and – according to Cabbalistic teaching – Adam and Eve), or to the Biblical giant Anak and his sons (Numbers 13:22). Alternatively, in his writing on the Abrahamic, Massad speaks of 'al-Khalil, the city of Abraham, the friend of God [*Khalilu Allah*]', differentiating between this 'living name' and what Massad calls 'the dead Jewish name' of the city, Hebron. He goes on to write that 'Al-Khalil's Palestinians, known as Khalilites (in Arabic *khalaylah*), have been enduring some of the worst forms of Jewish settler colonialism in the heart of their city and in their Abrahamic Sanctuary, where Abraham is said to be buried'.[818] Massad condemns Derrida for using 'Jewish colonial terminology' in invoking the 'Tomb of the Patriarchs' when referring to what he calls

[818] Massad, 'Forget Semitism!', pp. 77-78.

'the Abrahamic sanctuary', exclusively adopting the Muslim terms.[819]

In contrast to Massad, and with reference to Derrida's contribution to *Le Voyage en Palestine de la délégation du Parlement international des écrivains* (2002), Harrison argues that the Franco-Algerian intellectual reiterates 'in crystal clear terms that the foundational violence of Zionism and Israel is "colonial"' while simultaneously making 'his appeal for peace in Palestine-Israel in the name of "the Abrahamic"'.[820] As Martin McQuillan writes, '[i]f Said was the last Jewish intellectual, Derrida was the last of the last', as both were 'sceptical of the pure or originary'.[821] Massad maintains that, rather than seeing a colonial dimension, Derrida speaks of the conflict solely in religious terms, while he himself seemingly advocates an exclusively Khalilite and Muslim claim to the site. Through his reading of the Qur'an, Massad associates 'the Abrahamic' with 'an originary Islam', which accommodates Jews (and Christians) as 'people of the book' in a kind of internal pluralism, but does not see

[819] *Ibid*., p. 78.
[820] Harrison, *Transcolonial Maghreb*, p. 127. See also p. 179, n. 85, and p. 181, n. 122. Jacques Derrida, 'Message de Jacques Derrida', in *Le Voyage de la délégation du Parlement international des écrivains* (Castelnau-le-Lez: Climats, 2002), pp. 128-29.
[821] Martin McQuillan takes this from the Haaretz interview in which Said states, 'I do not appreciate going back to the origin, to the pure'. Said, 'My Right of Return', p. 457. See Martin McQuillan, 'The Last Jewish Intellectual', *The Year's Work in Critical and Cultural Theory*, 13 (2005), 1-26 (pp. 24-25). See also Martin McQuillan, 'Clarity and Doubt: Derrida Among the Palestinians', *Paragraph*, 39 (2016), 220-37.

Judaism (or Christianity) as an Abrahamic religion or faith alongside Islam.[822] According to Massad, '[the Qur'an] asserts an originary Islam which Abraham, Moses, and Jesus preached and to which they belonged and from which Jews and Christians had deviated (the Qur'an announces that "Abraham was neither Jew nor Christian but was a Hanif, a Muslim" [...])'.[823] The Abrahamic thus construed is exclusive to a specific Muslim worldview which tolerates Jews and Christians, but does not see their faith as equal or even valid.

Haddad, meanwhile, demonstrates the troubled coexistence of Judaism and Islam epitomised in the Tomb of the Patriarchs/Abrahamic Sanctuary as a (holy) site of memory: 'le seul endroit au monde où on trouve une synagogue et une mosquée sous un même toit' (*P*, p. 85). He highlights the 'palimpsestic' nature of the memories connected to this site, where multiple histories of religion and violence collide.[824] This is a site fraught with what Rothberg terms 'memory wars',[825] and has undergone a palimpsestic process of naming. In acknowledgement of this, Haddad's narrator

[822] Joseph Massad, *Islam in Liberalism* (Chicago; London: University of Chicago Press, 2015), p. 329.
[823] *Ibid*., p. 329.
[824] Here I am using Silverman's concept of 'palimpsestic memory' as an alternative metaphor to Rothberg's 'multidirectional memory', as it emphasises the layered nature of multiple memories concentrated on one historic site of memory. See Silverman, *Palimpsestic Memory.*
[825] Rothberg, *Multidirectional Memory*, p. 20.

refers to 'les minarets [...] du Haram al-Khalil' as well as to Hebron's ancient Jewish history and its more recent Zionist settler past (*P*, pp. 72-75). Referring at once to poetry and theology, Falastìn declares, 'Le vent se lève sur al-Khalil. On dit que l'ange d'Ibrahim bat des ailes sur le chêne de Mamré' (*P*, p. 105).[826] Here, Haddad brings in the other so-called 'Abrahamic faith', namely Christianity, in referring to the Oak of Abraham, and in alluding to the Biblical story of Abraham's visitation by the three angels (Genesis 18), which some Christians interpret as symbolic of the Trinity. At this site can be found the Monastery of the Trinity and the Church of the Holy Forefathers, affiliated with the Russian orthodox church. Yet in referring to one angel as opposed to the three, Falastìn is also alluding to the Abrahamic sacrifice. Haddad elucidates in the interview: '[l]e pacte qui liera la descendance d'Abram, devenu Abraham, au Dieu unique passe par le sacrifice rituel et l'intercession de l'ange, la substitution de la brebis […]. Son bras retenu par l'ange, Abraham n'a pas égorgé [son fils]'.[827]

The knotted history of this whole area comes to the fore in a conversation between

[826] It would appear that '[l]e vent se lève' is a reference to Paul Valéry's "Le Cimetière marin", in which the poet contemplates death, including images of 'anges curieux', and 'prudentes colombes', representing peace. See Hugh P. McGrath and Michael Comenetz, *Valery's Graveyard: Le Cimètiere marin* (New York: Peter Lang, 2013).
[827] Haddad, interviewed by Vince.

Falastìn and her mother's sister Layla, resident of Hebron/al-Khalil, who is introduced by the narrator through Falastìn's character point of view:

> Professeur d'histoire à l'école polytechnique de nouveau close par l'ennemi, sa tante Layla vivait seule dans cette maison haute de la vieille ville par défi du malheur ou mépris de l'adversité, malgré les contrôles incessants de l'armée et les menaces grossières des colons (*P*, p. 73).

Layla differentiates between 'l'occupant' (military) without and 'le colon' (settler) within; according to her, it is 'l'occupant' who sanctions, puts curfews in place, demolishes houses, and 'le colon' who sows terror and acts as though 'en terrain conquis' (*P*, p. 75). Similarly, Manastir talks about how both the army and the settlers want to rid the sector of its population (*P*, p. 69). Without naming the city in which she lives, Layla reminds Falastìn (and informs the reader) of its troubled past: 'Dans cette ville, autrefois, comme tu sais, il y eut des massacres de Juifs, de pauvres gens, des verriers, des maroquiniers qui vivaient là au fil des générations et depuis les siècles des siècles' (*P*, p. 74).[828] As Shipler notes,

[828] This is one of the reasons I would have to disagree with Harrison that Haddad's *Palestine* is 'devoid of any historical background'. Harrison, *Transcolonial Maghreb*, p. 10. Rather, Haddad intentionally writes an historian into *l'histoire*.

> [f]or centuries, a small community of devout Jews dwelled in a quarter of Hebron until Arabs rioting in 1929 killed many of them and drove out the rest. Some families returned several years later, only to be evacuated by the British in 1936 after renewed Arab riots.[829]

Layla also recalls a more recent trauma, this time targeting the Muslim population, namely the attack at Ibrahim's Mosque initiated by Brooklyn-born Doctor Goldstein, who she describes as 'un fanatique, un colon de Kiryat Arba', during Ramadan in 1994 (*P*, pp. 74-75).[830] Riots ensued, 'protestations légitimes' in the words of Layla, which in turn led to military repression by the IDF (*P*, p. 75).

It is in Hebron/al-Khalil that Cham-Nessim identifies himself as part of the oppressed Palestinian collective:

> Nous sommes bannis de chez nous, délogés, dépossédés, tous captifs. Partout des murs dressés, des barrages, des routes de détournement. Est-ce qu'on peut vivre comme ça, parqués dans les enclos et les cages d'une ménagerie? Veut-on nous pousser au suicide, à la dévastation? Je hais notre sort, je les déteste tous à en perdre l'esprit…

[829] Shipler, *Arab and Jew* (2015), p. 130.
[830] See Shipler, *Arab and Jew* (2015), pp. xviii, 131; and Massad, 'Forget Semitism!', p. 78.

The reference to suicide is an ominous one, and echoes Falastìn's words to her aunt Layla: 'J'aimerais mourir' (*P*, p. 76). Perhaps it is the fact that Cham is implicated in this oppression which is too much to bear at the end of the novel, leading him to *passe à l'acte*. While Falastìn maintains hope in a peaceful future, Cham-Nessim responds bitterly that peace is 'le droit du plus fort', emphasising the disproportionality of bilateral negotiations, and how these can mask ongoing oppression: 'Ces gens-là nous infligent leur paix d'envahisseur avec des barbelés et des tanks, en détruisant les villages et les oliveraies' (*P*, p. 110).

In their dialogue with one another, Cham-Nessim and Falastìn employ poetic, Biblical, and Qur'anic language, promoting coexistence on a linguistic, cultural, and religious level. He refers to her as *ahouvati*, 'my beloved' in Hebrew, and she refers to him as *habibi*, the Arabic equivalent (*P*, pp. 105-106, 111). Cham-Nessim symbolically falls in love with Falastìn, the inaccessible phantom-like figure and (*âme-*)*sœur* of sorts whose very name points to Palestine. Cham-Nessim ironically becomes dependent upon Falastìn for his very purpose and existence, and crucially for his memory: 'Elle était tout l'horizon de son être, son aspiration et sa mémoire. Il admit soudain son entière dépendance' (*P*, p. 110). Haddad avoids the colonial trope of conquering the feminised land of Palestine in his personification.

Falastìn is depicted as having masculine features, and with a female body that no longer follows the menstrual cycle as a result of anorexia (*P*, p. 35), carrying with it the risk of infertility: 'elle dissimule son extrême fragilité sous un port énergique, hardi, presque masculin' (*P*, p. 33). Her self-induced anorexia is linked to a desire for complete detachment, even self-annihilation, disguised or understood as self-sacrifice: 'L'état d'apesanteur totale auquel elle aspire se confondrait assez avec la grâce des martyrs' (*P*, p. 39).

It is not only Cham-Nessim who is in love with Falastìn; the water collector Saïfoudine is among her many admirers, as revealed in his internal dialogue: 'Sa maigreur est telle qu'il ne lui reste que sa beauté' (*P*, p. 41). Moreover, the Israeli army major ironically named Mazeltov (meaning 'bonne chance' in Hebrew) declares his love to Falastìn after releasing her from administrative detention and expressing his desire to join 'le camp damné des refuzniks': 'Moi, je pourrais tellement vous aimer, Falastìn! Je pourrais être pour vous, pour toi, oui, le plus tendre, le plus dévoué des compagnons…' (*P*, pp. 80-85). Here, Haddad's vision of a two-state solution (Israel and Palestine) comes through, consisting of 'deux États fédérés qui travaillent ensemble et dépendent positivement, démocratiquement

l'un de l'autre'.[831] And yet, the conditional tense in Mazeltov's declaration, coupled with Falastìn's response, demonstrates the current impossibility of such a confederation: 'Aimer, n'est-ce pas mourir?' (*P*, p. 85). This ominous rhetorical question foregrounds the novel's tragic ending.

In his disillusionment and disorientation, separated from Falastìn, Cham-turned-Nessim finds his only refuge in the company of Islamist extremist and Shoah-denier Omar, and ends up involved in a bomb plot. In an uncanny twist, he is given what are apparently false papers but which are in fact the ones he lost at the beginning of the narrative. It is now Nessim '[qui] n'existe plus' (*P*, p. 20), as Cham, once again 'citoyen israélien', takes a coach with settlers and tourists to Jerusalem, where he is fitted with a 'ceinture d'explosifs' (*P*, pp. 143-48). He is about to press the button when a friend recognises him, reminds him of his 'true' identity, and informs him of his brother's suicide. Instead of blowing up his own people to whom he no longer feels an attachment, setting off the bomb in a bus or marketplace as Omar suggests he should, he finds his refuznik late brother's house amongst the olive trees of East Jerusalem. Having regained his identity as an Israeli citizen, Cham follows

[831] Haddad, interviewed by Vince. Haddad states elsewhere that 'nous sommes nombreux, Juifs et Arabes, à penser que deux Etats de droit seront un jour prochain en paix. Dans *Palestine*, j'ai tenté de dire cette attente'. Haddad qtd. in Marin La Meslée, 'Voix de Palestine'.

in his brother's footsteps by returning to the dust with no apparent political agency but self-destruction. This recalls Haddad's own brother's suicide in Paris, where he shot himself after struggling with depression, 'à bout de forces devant l'incompréhension'.[832] Quoting Haddad, Alexandra Schwartzbrod writes, '[i]l dit avoir écrit « *dans une sorte d'urgence* » ce texte [*Palestine*] hanté par son propre frère, parti vivre dans une cabane en Israël parmi les Arabes, avant de revenir se suicider en France'.[833] Michel Haddad was an Israeli artist who fought for Palestinian rights and felt most at home in the Arab quarter in Jerusalem.[834] As literary journalist Valérie Marin La Meslée notes, '[l]a silhouette tragique de l'artiste […] traverse le roman [*Palestine*]', which has 'le regard rivé sur une paix pour laquelle, sur place, s'est battu son frère'.[835] In his interview with *Le Soir d'Algérie*, Haddad declares that he owes his concern for '[les] combats pour la justice et l'égalité' to this brother.[836]

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[832] Haddad qtd. in Kaouah, 'L'Écrivain Hubert Haddad'.

[833] Schwartzbrod, 'Noirceur et lumière de « Palestine »'.

[834] See Haddad, *Les Coïncidences exagérées*, pp. 102-4, 109-11, 147; and Haddad qtd. in Simonet, 'Hubert Haddad'. See also Marin La Meslée, 'Voix de Palestine'; and Schwartzbrod, 'Noirceur et lumière de « Palestine » '.

[835] Valérie Marin La Meslée, 'Haddad, le sage enflammé', *Le Point*, 10 April 2008.

[836] Haddad qtd. in Kaouah, 'L'Écrivain Hubert Haddad'. In another interview, Haddad speaks of how his brother went from 'espérance' to 'désenchantement': 'J'avais un frère aîné qui militait dans des partis de gauche et qui, plein d'espérance, avait décidé de partir dans les kibboutz, pensant qu'il pourrait changer les choses, porter ce pays vers la plus

In *Palestine*, the act of suicide is portrayed as a sacrificial one, whereby Cham takes the place of the lamb he pays a Muslim butcher to slaughter (*P*, pp. 155-56), recalling 'le sacrifice obvié d'Isaac ou d'Ismaël',[837] where a sacrificial ram is provided in the place of the son in both the Biblical and Qur'anic accounts, as seen in the previous chapter. In this way, Cham can be seen as a 'fedaï': 'celui qui se sacrifie'.[838] The imagery is highly symbolic in the closing passage of the novel: there is a single star in the sky alluding to Christ's nativity in Bethlehem (now in modern-day West Bank); there is an olive grove which recalls Paul's letter to the Romans about Gentiles (including Arabs) being grafted into the olive tree of the Jews in terms of salvation; there is a skylark, or *alouette*, recalling the French-Canadian children's song in which a lark's feathers are plucked as a punishment for having woken up the children; there is a solitary Muslim call to prayer from a muezzin; and finally there is silence, and the novel's ominously apocalyptic closing words, 'Il n'a plus âme qui vive' (*P*, 156).

In Haddad's *Palestine*, Cham symbolically lays down his own life out of despair and as a last resort. Why does he commit such a desperate act? Is it because he

belle des démocraties, le plus bel accord de paix avec les Palestiniens. Il a déchanté'. Haddad qtd. in Segal and Cartier, 'Entretien'.

[837] See Haddad, 'D'ailes et d'empreintes', p. 178.

[838] See definition of 'fedayin' in *Le Petit Robert*.

is unable to live with himself as a Palestinian in Israel or as an Israeli in Israel? Is it because he is unable to live without his beloved Falastìn (or Palestine)? Is it because he is unable to sustain the split and seemingly contradictory identity of being both Israeli and Palestinian or both Jew and Arab? In line with Hochberg's argument, the novel's ending demonstrates 'the present *impossibility* of being both Arab and Jew/Israeli and Palestinian', indeed of being a Jewish-Palestinian, not to mention a Palestinian Jew, Hebron being a place where indigenous Palestinian Jews lived before the State of Israel was founded. These identities cannot exist as equally hyphenated as long as one occupies, denies, or seeks the destruction of the other. However, *Palestine* as a whole anticipates 'an Arab-Jewish future located beyond the limits of separatist imagination'.[839] Hochberg envisages this 'Arab-Jewish future' of coexistence in the framework of a binational state. In a similar vein of cautionary optimism over a one-state solution, Shenhav and Hever argue that '[t]he employment of a non-binary form of Arab-Jewish identity [...] provides us with a political strategy that challenges not only the existing cultural matrix in Israel, but also Jewish histories in the Arab world, and hopefully will bring back remnants of the repressed, and with it the

[839] Hochberg, *In Spite of Partition*, p. 19, original emphasis.

possibility of Jewish Arab coexistence'.[840] Perhaps a non-binary form of Jewish-Palestinian identity could have such potential also. Yet, although Haddad hints at this possibility, he nevertheless advocates a two state-solution where Israelis and Palestinians are in a relationship of partnership rather than one of symbiosis, maintaining their national integrity while co-operating with one another on an equal footing. This relationship is premised on mutual recognition of the interrelated traumatic legacies of the Shoah, colonialism, and the Nakba, while addressing neo-colonial aspects of contemporary policy.

Ever the visionary, almost apologetic for his utopian view, Haddad declares, '[c]ette fédération de deux États en synergie inventive pourrait changer la face du monde, nous sommes bien sûr en pleine utopie encore, mais on peut y travailler et y penser'.[841] As he notes elsewhere, specifically in relation to *Palestine*, '[l]e roman est cette magie qui permet de penser librement l'Histoire, il porte à une sorte d'objectivité intuitive où même si l'on ne connaît pas la solution, on est persuadé qu'il y en a une'.[842] Thus, through the magic of storytelling (*l'histoire*), which allows for

[840] Shenhav and Hever, '"Arab Jews" After Structuralism', p. 114.

[841] Haddad, interviewed by Vince. In another interview, he seems to suggest that he once supported a binational or one-state solution: 'Comme je rêvais naguère d'un État binational israélo-palestinien pleinement démocratique et laïque qui soit un exemple pour le monde'. Haddad qtd. in Kaouah, 'L'Écrivain Hubert Haddad'.

[842] Haddad qtd. in Marin La Meslée, 'Voix de Palestine'.

free-thinking when it comes to *l'Histoire*, an alternative future can be imagined, even in a seemingly impossible situation. Yet the novel's tragic ending is true to the current political impasse and also demonstrates the danger of effacing one's own history or identity and appropriating that of another, rather than acknowledging the existence (or hyphenation) of both, however contradictory they may be. This is something which is explored in Khadra's *L'Attentat* from the opposite point of view, in its depiction of a Palestinian becoming naturalised as an Israeli (thus betraying his Bedouin roots), who is implicated in his wife's suicide attack.

CHAPTER IV

Conflicting Voices? The Israeli-Palestinian and the Bedouin-Israeli

Khadra is the best known, indeed the most popular, of the authors explored in this thesis, yet out of all four authors (five if Chouraqui is included), he is the only one not to have been to 'the Holy Land'. When asked about this in an interview, Khadra responded with an implicit reference to Sansal's controversial visit: '[l]orsqu'on veut diaboliser quelqu'un dans le monde arabe, il suffit de dire qu'il est allé en Israël. Aujourd'hui, les mentalités sont telles que les écrivains arabes ne doivent pas prendre de risques inconsidérés'.[843] Khadra can be seen as a Franco-Maghrebi writer in so far as he writes exclusively in French and chose to retire to France following service as a counter-terrorism officer in the Algerian army, a voluntary exile of sorts from his native homeland of Algeria. Khadra, whose real name is Mohammed Moulessehoul, took his wife's name as a *nom de plume* so as to avoid censorship by the Algerian army.[844] As Dominique Garand notes,

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[843] Yasmina Khadra qtd. in Farid Ali, '« J'ai voulu écrire LE livre du conflit israélo-palestinien »', *Jeune Afrique*, 12 septembre 2005, <http://www.jeuneafrique.com/112003/archives-thematique/j-ai-voulu-crire-le-livre-du-conflit-isra-lo-palestinien> [accessed 7 April 2018] (para 13 of 29).

[844] In an interview with Israeli newspaper *Haaretz*, Khadra claims, 'I use the name to celebrate the names of all Algerian women – they were always at the forefront of their people's battle'. Yasmina Khadra qtd. in Goel Pinto, 'A Man Named Yasmina', *Haaretz*, 30 November 2006, <https://www.haaretz.com/israel-

ces deux choix initiaux (le français et le pseudonyme féminin) mettent en place une stratégie de distanciation à l'égard du pouvoir dominant en Algérie (distanciation qui prendra en outre la forme décisive de l'exil), ainsi qu'une stratégie d'évitement de la censure telle que pratiquée dans ce pays.[845]

In Khadra's own words, '[j'ai été] marginalisé trente-six ans par une armée hostile à ma vocation de romancier'.[846] Jacqueline O'Rourke describes how when 'his military background' was revealed, 'the falsely constructed objectivity of cosmopolitan Muslim interlocutor' came under 'public scrutiny'.[847] Moreover, many readers believed him to be female and felt somewhat betrayed when he 'came out' as a (military) man, resulting in the publication of his apologetic book *L'Imposture des mots* in 2002.

In an interview screened on *Aljazeera* following the Charlie Hebdo attacks in January 2015, Khadra was described as 'a

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news/culture/leisure/a-man-named-yasmina-1.205841> [accessed 18 October 2017] (para 3 of 26).

[845] Dominique Garand, 'Que peut la fiction? Yasmina Khadra, le terrorisme et le conflit israélo-palestinien', *Études françaises*, 44 (2008), 37-56 (p. 40).

[846] Yasmina Khadra, *L'Imposture des mots* (Paris: Julliard, 2002), p. 94. See also Garand, 'Que peut la fiction?', p. 40.

[847] Jacqueline O'Rourke, *Representing Jihad: The Appearing and Disappearing Radical* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 2012), p. 70. See also Beate Burtscher-Bechter, 'Wanted: National Algerian Identity', in *Investigating Identities: Questions of Identity in Contemporary International Crime Fiction*, ed. by Marieke Krajenbrink and Kate M. Quinn, pp. 183-98 (p. 194); and Yasmina Khadra, 'Yasmina Khadra', in *La Langue française vue de la Méditerranée*, pp. 85-89 (p. 88).

man whose own life stands right at the intersection of the big debate about Islam and the West, Muslims in France, and the role of art and literature'.[848] In the 2000s, following 9/11 and during the Second Intifada, he completed a trilogy, the aim of which, according to Anne-Marie McManus, is 'to make Middle Eastern terrorism […] comprehensible to Western audiences'.[849] The first novel in the trilogy is entitled *Les Hirondelles de Kaboul* (2002) and hones in on the experience of women under the Taliban. *L'Attentat* (2005) is the second novel and will be the focus of this chapter, as it is in this novel that Khadra deals with the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.[850] The third novel, *Les Sirènes de Baghdad* (2006), takes the Iraq War as its subject matter, continuing with the theme of terrorism and Islamist fundamentalism.[851]

Garand writes that, 'dans un climat géopolitique où tendent à s'exacerber les motifs d'incompréhension entre l'Occident chrétien et le monde arabo-musulman, il est manifeste que les romans de Khadra tendent à

[848] Jacky Rowland in interview with Yasmina Khadra, 'Yasmina Khadra: "A Battle of Extremes"', 18 January 2015, <http://www.aljazeera.com/programmes/talktojazeera/2015/01/yasmina-khadra-battle-extremes-2015117101428817312.html> [accessed 31 March 2015].

[849] Anne-Marie McManus, 'Sentimental Terror Narratives: Gendering Violence, Dividing Sympathy', *Journal of Middle East Women's Studies*, 9 (2013), 80-107 (p. 91).

[850] Yasmina Khadra, *L'Attentat* (Paris: Julliard, 2005). All references to the primary text shall appear in brackets as follows: *A*, page number.

[851] See Garand, 'Que peut la fiction?', p. 39.

rendent intelligibles aux yeux des Occidentaux certains traits des cultures arabophones'.[852] As Khadra declares in an interview with *Le Monde des livres*, '[j]'ai consacré cette trilogie au malentendu entre Orient et Occident – terme plus juste que celui *"choc des civilisations"*, que je refuse – par devoir'.[853] His reference to and distancing from the clash of civilisations thesis is worth noting here. This thesis, which emphasised antagonism between the West and Islam (portrayed as monolithic and opposed entities), was put forward by political scientist Samuel Huntington first in an essay entitled 'The Clash of Civilizations?' appearing in 1993, and then in a book entitled *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order* published in 1996, with a second edition appearing in 2002.[854] The book was translated into French in 1997 under the title *Le Choc des civilisations*, and the overall thesis gained in popularity across the Western world particularly following 9/11.[855] Huntington takes the title of his essay and subsequent book from Bernard Lewis'

[852] Garand, 'Que peut la fiction?', p. 41.
[853] Yasmina Khadra qtd. in Christine Rousseau, 'Aller au commencement du malentendu', *Le Monde des livres*, 28 September 2006, <http://www.lemonde.fr/livres/article/2006/09/28/yasmina-khadra-aller-au-commencement-du-malentendu_817959_3260.html#tBi7zmlj4mbKtFIw.99> [accessed 27 March 2018] (para 8 of 8).
[854] Samuel P. Huntington, 'The Clash of Civilizations?', *Foreign Affairs*, 72 (1993), 22-49; and Samuel P. Huntington, *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order* (London: Free Press, 2002 [1996]).
[855] See Mélandri Pierre, 'Le 11 septembre annonce-t-il un « choc des civilisations »?', *Cités*, 2 (2003), 29-43.

provocative article 'The Roots of Muslim Rage' (1990), in which Lewis writes, '[t]his is no less than a clash of civilizations – the perhaps irrational but surely historic reaction of an ancient rival [i.e. Islam] against our Judeo-Christian heritage, our secular present, and the worldwide expansion of both'.[856] While still using the categories of East and West, Khadra adopts a secular, multicultural, and interfaith outlook which seeks to address the 'malentendu' between them. Moreover, in *L'Attentat*, he situates a suicide attack within the specific Israeli-Palestinian conflict of nationalisms, where it is conceived as a specific form of anti-colonial armed resistance against oppression, rather than as part of a worldwide Jihad against Western (neo-)imperialism or 'Judeo-Christianity'.

In 2001, Said wrote a response piece to Huntington's thesis entitled 'The Clash of Ignorance', in which he condemns the pigeonholing approach promoted in the use of 'unedifying labels like Islam and the West'.[857] He argues that the way Huntington describes Islam in the clash of civilisations thesis 'belongs to the discourse of Orientalism, a construction fabricated to whip up feelings of

[856] Bernard Lewis, 'The Roots of Muslim Rage', *The Atlantic*, September 1990, <https://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/1990/09/the-roots-of-muslim-rage/304643/> [accessed 27 March 2018] (para 46 of 51).

[857] Edward Said, 'The Clash of Ignorance', *The Nation*, 4 October 2001, <https://www.thenation.com/article/clash-ignorance/> [accessed 27 March 2018] (para 8 of 14).

hostility and antipathy'.[858] Said instead promotes the study of 'complex histories that defy such reductiveness and have seeped from one territory into another, in the process overriding the boundaries that are supposed to separate us all into divided armed camps', drawing attention to 'the interconnectedness of innumerable lives, "ours" as well as "theirs"'.[859] The idea of seeping, interrelated, and boundless histories is conceptualised by Rothberg as '[a] multidirectional confluence of disparate historical imaginaries', which recognises 'the interconnectedness of different perpetrators and different victims in overlapping, yet distinct, scenarios of extreme violence'.[860] One of the definitions Rothberg provides for his concept of 'multidirectional memory' is 'a model based on recognition of the productive interplay of disparate acts of remembrance and developed in contrast to an understanding of memory as involved in a competition'.[861]

A failure to recognise the interconnectedness of lived memories and a reduction of rhetoric to (potential) victim/(potential) perpetrator – or jihadist – is indicative of the ignorance highlighted by Said. It is this ignorance which Khadra seeks

[858] Edward Said, 'The Myth of the "Clash of Civilizations"', *YouTube*, 13 May 2011, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aPS-pONiEG8> [accessed 19 April 2018]. This lecture was delivered in 1998.
[859] Said, 'The Clash of Ignorance' (para 8 of 14).
[860] Rothberg, *Multidirectional Memory*, pp. 271, 96.
[861] *Ibid*., p. 309.

to redress in *L'Attentat* through his representation of the complex histories that form the backdrop to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and the interconnectedness of Arabs (of which Bedouins), Jews, Palestinians, and Israelis. As Youssef Abouali notes in his book *Yasmina Khadra, ou, la recherche de la vérité: étude de la trilogie sur le malentendu entre l'Orient et l'Occident* (2013), Khadra aims to challenge 'des idées préconçues et des approches réductionnistes', particularly when it comes to orientalist views of terrorists on the one hand, and of Bedouins on the other: '[Khadra] se focalise sur les blocages et tente de les dépasser en mettant en lumière deux éléments fondamentaux: le « terroriste » et le « Bédouin »'.[862] These two figures are at the centre of *L'Attentat*, yet neither conforms to stereotype: the terrorist is an emancipated woman and the Bedouin is an integrated, successful, westernised man. As Khadra declares in an interview with *Le Monde des livres*, his aim is to 'reconstruire les passerelles naturelles qui ont toujours existé entre l'Orient et l'Occident' in the face of media bias and political discourse which tends to demonise – and orientalise – Arab Muslims as (potential) terrorists.[863] Similarly, he states in his interview with the *Independent* that '[w]e are living in an age where much of the

[862] Youssef Abouali, *Yasmina Khadra ou la recherche de la vérité: Étude de la trilogie sur le malentendu entre l'Orient et l'Occident* (Paris: L'Harmattan, 2013), p. 349.
[863] Khadra qtd. in Rousseau, 'Aller au commencement du malentendu' (para 1 of 8).

media coverage of the Orient is lies and fabulation, [...] driven by an ideology that Arabs are barbarous, Westerners civilised'.[864] Indeed, as Stephen Morton notes, drawing from Said, Western discourse on terrorism (for example, as barbarism) can take the form of orientalism, particularly when this discourse is premised on a clash of civilisations myth.[865]

Contextualising and Situating L'Attentat

Although Khadra's trilogy departs from Algeria as physical location, he nevertheless alludes to his native country, and notably the Black Decade, during which he was invested in anti-terrorism as part of the army (itself accused of committing atrocities, which Khadra denies). In the interview with *Le Monde des livres*, he states, '[c]ontrairement à certains qui s'érigent en monument de solidarités et d'humanité, j'ai fait la guerre contre les terroristes'.[866] So, while on the one hand he seeks to humanise and contextualise so-called terrorists, on the other hand he takes a firm stance against terrorism, having

[864] Yasmina Khadra qtd. in Gerry Feehily, 'Yasmina Khadra: Tools in the War for Truth', *Independent*, 6 July 2006, <http://www.independent.co.uk/arts-entertainment/books/features/yasmina-khadra-tools-in-the-war-for-truth406905.
html> [accessed 14 October 2017] (para 15 of 15).
[865] See Stephen Morton, 'Terrorism, Orientalism and Imperialism', *Wasifiri*, 22 (2007), 36-42 (p. 36). See also Said, 'The Myth of the "Clash of Civilizations"'.
[866] Khadra qtd. in Rousseau, 'Aller au commencement du malentendu' (para 4 of 8).

experienced this first-hand in the Algerian context. This can be seen in his remarks following the Charlie Hebdo attack, in which he refers to terrorism in 1990s Algeria, declaring, 'je suis Tahar Djaout, je suis Youcef Sebti, je suis Abderrahmane Mahmoudi', recalling the names of Algerian journalists who were targeted during the Black Decade.[867] Taking a long view, Robert Spencer suggests that Khadra's 'interest in terrorist violence and its origins is the result of [...] [his] Algerian provenance':

> For it is not easy to forget that the use of terrifying violence for political ends has been a constant theme of Algerian history: from [...] its initial colonisation in the nineteenth century, to the protracted repression of French colonial rule, the frenzy of indiscriminate bloodletting unleashed by the fascist OAS in 1962 and the unspeakable atrocities perpetrated by both the army and the Armed Islamic Groups in the civil war of the 1990s.[868]

It is interesting to note that Spencer excludes acts of resistance by Algerian freedom-fighters, some of which were perceived as terrorist acts by France. He goes on to write that 'nothing illustrates more clearly my point

[867] Khadra in interview with Rowland, 'Yasmina Khadra: "A Battle of Extremes"'.
[868] Robert Spencer, 'Reading Lolita in Tel Aviv: Terrorism, Fundamentalism and the Novel', *Textual Practice*, 27 (2013), 399-417 (p. 405).

about the capacity of novels to transcend the constraints of identity and provenance than the fact that Khadra is not a Palestinian, but an Algerian living and publishing in France'.[869] Here, he is referring specifically to *L'Attentat*, in which Khadra writes in the first-person narrative voice from the perspective of a Bedouin-Palestinian-turned-Israeli.

Although much of Khadra's fiction has been translated into English and published in both the UK and the US, my focus is on the French audience, forming a significant part of Khadra's readership,[870] whose curiosity and desire to make sense of terrorism has become all the more pertinent in the light of the rise of Islamic fundamentalism in France. This has been manifested most recently in the Charlie Hebdo, Bataclan attacks, and Nice Bastille Day, while also threatening and in some cases targeting France's Jewish population, as in the Hyper Casher incident. It is important to note, however, that none of the novels in the trilogy is set in France; Khadra's focus, as McManus points out, is on 'Middle Eastern terrorism'. Nevertheless, he indirectly addresses fears and prejudices held in France where Islamophobia is on the rise, particularly following recent terrorist attacks by so-called 'jihadists'.

In her book *Representing Jihad: The Appearing and Disappearing Radical*, O'Rourke defines the jihadist as someone who

[869] *Ibid*.
[870] According to Khadra, he has 4 million readers in France alone. Khadra in interview with Rowland, 'Yasmina Khadra: "A Battle of Extremes"'.

'shares concerns and visions with various Islamists, but advocates for and employs militant and violent methods, often contrary to traditional Islamist doctrines'.[871] She notes that, particularly following 9/11 and other terrorist attacks in the Western world, '[a] hunger to know those anonymous others [i.e. jihadists], to theorize their intentions and perhaps even to humanize them is evident in popular culture and theory, particularly over the past decade'.[872] It is this 'hunger' that drives *L'Attentat* and which Khadra seeks to feed. As O'Rourke notes, *L'Attentat* was originally published in the wake of the London bombings in 2005, and came out in English translation in 2006.[873] O'Rourke categorises Khadra as a '"good" Muslim' in that he 'attempt[s] to translate the sign of *jihad* for a largely uninformed audience [...] making visible the spectre of the jihadist',[874] specifically through the figure of the female suicide bomber Sihem, who haunts the narrative of *L'Attentat* and its protagonist-narrator, her husband Amine.

L'Attentat, the second novel in Khadra's trilogy, was nominated for the Prix Goncourt and won several less prestigious prizes.[875] The novel was later adapted into an award-winning film, directed by Lebanese

[871] O'Rourke, *Representing Jihad*, p. 7.
[872] *Ibid*., p. 7.
[873] See O'Rourke, *Representing Jihad*, p. 75.
[874] O'Rourke, *Representing Jihad*, p. 10.
[875] Prix des libraires, Prix Tropiques, Prix Découverte Figaro Magazine, Grand prix des lectrices Côté Femme, Prix des lecteurs du Télégramme.

director Ziad Doueiri, which was released in 2012, and a *bande dessinée* published in the same year, each with subtle differences.[876] In *L'Attentat*, Khadra explores the complex issues of integration and fundamentalism within the context of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, set during the Second Intifada (2000-2005). Daniel Byman writes that '[a]s the [Second] Intifada wore on, the Israeli Arab community became more involved in terrorism'.[877] In September 2001, a year after 9/11, Schacher Habishi was the first Israeli Arab to commit a suicide attack, in a railway station in Northern Israel.[878] *L'Attentat* focuses on two characters who would be defined by the State of Israel as belonging to the 'Israeli Arab community'. More specifically, Khadra's narrative traces the

[876] Ziad Doueiri, dir., *L'Attentat* (Canal Plus, 2012). Loïc Dauvillier (Scenario) and Glen Chapron (Illustrations), *L'Attentat – D'après le roman de Yasmina Khadra* (Paris: Glénat, 2012). The film won the Etoile d'Or/Grand Prix at the Festival International du Film de Marrakech (Edition 12) in 2012. However, it was banned in the twenty-two member states of the Arab League, including Doueiri's home country of Lebanon, because it was filmed in Israel and included Israeli actors. See Walid Salem, 'Le film « L'Attentat » reçoit le prix de la censure de la Ligue arabe', *Nouvelobs – Rue 89*, 28 May 2013, <http://rue89.nouvelobs.com/rue89-culture/2013/05/28/film-lattentat-recoit-prix-censure-ligue-arabe-242739> [accessed 22 February 2016]. It is interesting to note differences in the adaptations: for example, in both the graphic novel and film there is no mention of Bedouin identity, nor is any explicit reference made to the Shoah. Significantly, in the film adaptation, Sihem is a Christian rather than a Muslim.

[877] Daniel Byman, *A High Price: The Triumphs and Failures of Israeli Counterterrorism* (New York; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), p. 129.

[878] See Byman, *A High Price*, p. 129. See also Barry Rubin and Judith Colp Rubin, *Chronologies of Modern Terrorism* (Armonk, N.Y.: M.E. Sharpe, 2008), p. 221.

emotional journey of Dr Amine Jaafari, a Bedouin surgeon with Israeli citizenship, following the alarming discovery that his wife is responsible for a suicide attack in a Tel Aviv restaurant.

In an interview with *The Independent*, following the translation of *L'Attentat* into English, Khadra states boldly:

> The Israel/Palestine conflict destabilises not just the Middle East, but the entire world [...]. On both sides it shows up man at his most wicked and bestial. The figure of Amin[e], a naturalised Israeli citizen whose wife cannot share in his happiness because her own happiness is rendered meaningless by the sickening conditions the Palestinians must endure, seemed the best way to encapsulate the problem.[879]

In the novel, through first-person narrative, Khadra tracks the protagonist's emotions – from denial to rage – and his subsequent investigative search into the trajectory of his seemingly assimilated wife which led her to commit the suicide attack. As O'Rourke notes, '[t]he fact that Khadra makes his jihadist a woman is significant, given there has been a great deal of discussion on the rising number of female jihadists, particularly in Palestine',[880] yet the focus is very much on

[879] Khadra qtd. in Feehily, 'Yasmina Khadra: Tools in the War for Truth' (para 12 of 15).
[880] O'Rourke, *Representing Jihad*, p. 76.

the 'wickedness' of 'man' alongside the 'humanity' and 'humanism' of the male protagonist. In the words of O'Rourke, '[w]hen his wife Sihem is identified as a suicide bomber, his [Amine's] constructed identity unravels'.[881] Similarly, Abouali writes that '[Amine] part à la quête de la vérité sur ce qui s'est passé avec son épouse. Mais cette quête finit par basculer en une tout autre, complètement différente de la première. Elle devient une quête identitaire'.[882] Amine's identity is constructed through naturalisation and integration as an Israeli citizen and denial of his Palestinian roots, embedded in Bedouin heritage. Two opposing responses to Arab Israeli citizenship are characterised within the married couple at the centre of the narrative: integration on the part of Amine and *intègrisme* on the part of his wife, Sihem. Alongside these individual micronarratives, two polarised metanarratives emerge: the vicious cycle of terrorism and inevitable repression (in the name of security) on the one hand, and colonial violence leading to necessary resistance (in the name of justice) on the other. Neil Orlowsky summarises these narratives as 'the need for one side to engage in violence as the basis for a reclamation of identity' and '[the need for] the other side to offset this violence through perceivably oppressive means as the basis of ensuring its

[881] *Ibid*.
[882] Abouali, *Yasmina Khadra ou la recherche de la vérité*, p. 224.

own national security'.[883] It is these (micro- and meta-) narratives that will be analysed in what follows.

Drawing on religious language in a similar way to Benaïssa and Haddad, Khadra states in an interview with Israeli newspaper *Haaretz*, following the translation of *L'Attentat* into Hebrew, that

> [t]he world always needed a sacrificial lamb. Now there's no better lamb than Israel and Palestine, because the conflict involves the religious question that divides the world. The Jews are in favor of Israel, the Muslims are in favor of Palestine, and the rest of the world rejoices. [...] The Jewish people suffered throughout human history [...] They always blamed [...] [the Jews] for the bad things that happened in the world. In France, they now blame the Muslim immigrants for every problem: poverty, unemployment, etc. Two peoples that the entire world hates are fighting each other rather than standing united.[884]

[883] Neil Orlowsky, 'The Hundred Year Headache: Israel, Palestine and Frantz Fanon', in *Fanon and the Counterinsurgency of Education*, ed. by George J. S Dei (Rotterdam; Boston; Taipei: Sense Publishers, 2009), pp. 197-226 (p. 199). Roberts makes a link between Israel's narrative of security, the trauma of the Shoah, and the fear of its repetition: 'Permanently vulnerable, Israel must respond to any attack with massive force. For a nation with genocide as a central political referent, security is paramount'. Roberts, *Contested Land, Contested Memory*, p. 154.

[884] Khadra qtd. in Pinto, 'A Man Named Yasmina' (para 22 of 26).

Of course, this is an over-simplification (it does not account for Jewish anti-Zionists or Muslims in favour of a two-state solution, for example), reducing the conflict to a solely religious one. And yet it resonates with Said's call for reconciliation and recognition between the 'two communities of suffering' who find themselves in conflict over the same land.[885] It is important to note that Khadra is not saying that Muslims have replaced Jews as *the* suffering people, rather that Jews and Muslims both face forms of racism in anti-Semitism and Islamophobia. Indeed, Khadra hints at the overlap between these two phenomena, and the potential for solidarity ('standing united') between Jews and Muslims which is obfuscated by the ongoing conflict, but which he nevertheless calls for in *L'Attentat*. Significantly, in referring to the situation in France, he is also alluding to the importation of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict onto French soil.[886]

Resisting Genre

Francis Blessington convincingly argues that *L'Attentat* can be read as a terrorist novel, an extension of the political novel, a genre in which the author 'do[es] not argue political

[885] Said, 'The One-State Solution' (para 18 of 29).
[886] See Debrauwere-Miller, 'Introduction', pp. 7-12, 17. See also Marc Hecker, *Intifada française: de l'importation du conflit israélo-palestinien* (Paris: Ellipses, 2012).

causes as much as represent them living in people', that is, the characters therein.[887] The terrorist novel, according to Blessington, represents not only political causes but also 'the dilemma of a character who is trapped among often negative alternatives', usually with a focus on perpetrators as opposed to victims, perpetrators 'whose choices and acts we [as readers] are asked to understand, even momentarily sympathize with, though not necessarily to condone or forgive'.[888] Yet the extension of his argument to defining the terrorist novel as a Bildungsroman is less convincing, and his straightforward reading of *L'Attentat* in particular – which he describes as 'a Bildungsroman in which the hero shifts from satisfied materialistic doctor and loving husband to almost being a jihadist sympathizer before he is annihilated'[889] – is an oversimplified one. Indeed, Spencer takes issue with this reading when he writes that 'Amin[e]'s recovery from his initial despair results not, as [...] Blessington alleges, in Amine[e] becoming a "jihadist sympathizer" but in a state of general dissatisfaction', yet he leaves out the 'almost' when quoting Blessington, making the latter's argument out to be even less nuanced than it is.[890] Nevertheless, Spencer has a point, and his argument is certainly more nuanced, if

[887] Francis Blessington, 'Politics and the Terrorist Novel', *Sewanee Review*, 116 (2008), 116-24 (p. 117).
[888] *Ibid*., p. 118.
[889] *Ibid*., p. 119.
[890] Spencer, 'Reading Lolita in Tel Aviv', p. 407.

bordering on sympathy itself. Spencer writes that, 'Amin[e] is dissatisfied with both his former complicity through obliviousness in Israel's oppression of the Palestinians *and* with the maudlin and nationalistic justification offered by his wife'.[891] However, as we shall see, denial is perhaps a more accurate word to describe Amine's relationship to Israel's oppression of the Palestinians, rather than obliviousness, which suggests ignorance.

As well as resembling a terrorist novel, *L'Attentat* contains features of crime fiction, and particularly the thriller genre, in its dramatisation of the aftermath of a suicide attack during the Second Intifada. Drawing from Tzvetan Todorov, Claire Gorrara writes that

> [i]n the thriller, the detective-hero is no longer a genius of detection invulnerable to attack and far superior to his enemies. Rather, he is pitched into the very action of the novel, often disorientated and caught up in a whirlwind of events over which he has little control.[892]

In *L'Attentat*, the protagonist takes the situation into his own hands, although he cannot control it any more than he could the actions of his wife. In the words of Abouali,

[891] *Ibid*., original emphasis.
[892] Claire Gorrara, 'Introduction', in *The Roman Noir in Post-War French Culture: Dark Fictions*, ed. by Claire Gorrara (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), pp. 1-20 (p. 4). See Tzvetan Todorov, *Poétique de la prose* (Paris: Seuil, 1971).

'[a]près l'acte de sa femme, il se livre a un véritable travail de détective'.[893] He is thus a kind of self-made detective-hero who finds himself in a precarious position worsened by the fact that he chooses to put himself in ever more dangerous situations. As Gorrara notes in relation to the thriller, '[w]ith no mediating narrator-figure to organize the sequence of events [as in the classic mystery novel], the reader is aligned with the viewpoint of the detective-hero and shares his heady sense of confusion and danger'.[894] This contact is made all the more immediate in *L'Attentat* through the use of first-person narrative and present tense.[895] *L'Attentat* is not so much a 'whodunit' as a 'how did she get there?' and this question remains unanswered.

The novel subverts the traditional framework of 'geometric patterns where the problem-solving aspect of the narrative predominates over the representation of a specific social and political context'.[896] The problem is un(re)solved, reflective of the conflict; Amine never finds out who or what exactly led Sihem to commit the attack, and falls victim himself to a counter-attack as part of a vicious cycle of violence. The 'specific social and political context' comes to the fore, set as the novel is in the particular time period

[893]Abouali, *Yasmina Khadra ou la recherche de la vérité*, p. 316.
[894] Gorrara, 'Introduction', in *The Roman Noir in Post-War French Culture*, p. 4.
[895] See Spencer, 'Reading Lolita in Tel Aviv', p. 406.
[896] Gorrara, 'Introduction', in *The Roman Noir in Post-War French Culture*, p. 3.

of the Second Intifada in the geographical locations of Tel Aviv, Jerusalem, Bethlehem, Nablus, and Jenin. Amine begins as a suspect, and then becomes a self-made detective.[897] He starts off wanting to prove his own innocence and that of his wife, but then is taken up by an obsession with betrayal. As his wife is revealed to be the perpetrator of a suicide attack, the act is construed as one of adultery, in terms of infidelity to her husband and, it would appear, to the state which provided them both shelter. This is further complicated by the red herring of the supposed illicit relationship between Sihem and Adel, Amine's nephew, a fellow freedom-fighter. As Abouali notes, '[Amine] ne recouvre la paix que quand Adel lui apprend que leur relation était une pure collaboration pour la Cause'.[898] The irony is that Amine has betrayed his first love, the ancestral homeland of his Bedouin family, in not joining this collaborative movement of resistance against Palestinian oppression by the State of Israel.

Moreover, *L'Attentat* features characteristics of what Lee Horsley terms 'the noir thriller'.[899] Gorrara writes that

> *noir* narratives centre on the ill-fated relationship between the main protagonist and society. Characters

[897] See Gorrara, 'Introduction', in *The Roman Noir in Post-War French Culture*, p. 5.
[898] Abouali, *Yasmina Khadra ou la recherche de la vérité*, p. 115.
[899] See Lee Horsley, *The Noir Thriller* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2001).

> are presented as doomed and isolated. They are unable to act independently or are cast out from their family and community and constrained by the prejudices and pressures specific to their historical context.[900]

The difference is that Amine casts himself out of his family and community by choosing to integrate into Israeli society at all costs, only to be rejected from this very society. Another characteristic of the noir thriller is that characters typically 'challenge the record of the police and the judiciary to act as the moral arbiters of the nation', as Amine does with Mossad, Israel's national intelligence agency.[901] He also refuses to hand in the letter written by his wife which he receives after the attack, although this may be the very *indice* the police are looking for. Gorrara writes that '[d]ialogue and social interaction are the narrative motors of *noir* texts rather than description or psychological introspection'.[902] Khadra combines 'psychological introspection', indeed periods of isolation, with '[d]ialogue and social interaction' in *L'Attentat*, which translates into a psychological thriller in its film adaptation.

It is interesting to note the intersection between crime fiction and identities (both of the author and of the characters), particularly

[900] Gorrara, 'Introduction', in *The Roman Noir in Post-War French Culture*, p. 6.
[901] *Ibid*., p. 6.
[902] Gorrara, 'Introduction', in *The Roman Noir in Post-War French Culture*, p. 7.

in relation to Khadra and his *œuvre*. Marieke Krajenbrink and Kate M. Quinn's co-edited volume *Investigating Identities: Questions of Identity in Contemporary International Crime Fiction* (2009) rests on the premise that 'the crime genre, which has proved popular all over the world, has been used in recent decades to articulate and investigate notions of identity'.[903] Beate Burtscher-Bechter's chapter, 'Wanted: National Algerian Identity', is most relevant to our discussion here.[904] In this chapter, she writes of 'the development of the francophone Algerian crime novel', which is characterised by 'the search for a national identity', during both the immediate state-building process following the Algerian War of Independence and the Black Decade of the 1990s and early 2000s.[905] These specifically Algerian crime novels written in French are 'closely related to the political, social and historical events of the times they were written and clearly show the development of an Algeria in search of itself'.[906] Burtscher-Bechter claims that this localised genre, which emerged with Youcef Khader's spy novel series, 'attained its first high point in the *romans noirs* of Yasmina Khadra' during the

[903] Marieke Krajenbrink and Kate M. Quinn, 'Introduction: Investigating Identities', in *Investigating Identities: Questions of Identity in Contemporary International Crime Fiction*, ed. by Marieke Krajenbrink and Kate M. Quinn (Amsterdam; New York: Rodopi, 2009), pp. 1-9 (p. 1).
[904] Burtscher-Bechter, 'Wanted: National Algerian Identity', pp. 183-98.
[905] *Ibid*., p. 183.
[906] *Ibid*., p. 183.

décennie noire.[907] Here she is referring in particular to a series of novels by Khadra centred on the (Bedouin) detective-hero Commissaire Llob who, 'as a police officer in the Algerian capital and as an author [...] stands for justice and enlightenment'.[908] In *L'Attentat*, the self-made detective-hero is the first-person narrative Amine who, as doctor, stands for the dignity of life. Yet as husband of the culprit-victim, he is less objective and more implicated than a police officer in the very crime he seeks to comprehend, while working through the grief over losing his wife and the fury over her perceived betrayal.

Gorrara situates Khadra in 'a Mediterranean *noir* movement [...] whose primary function has exceeded literary entertainment to tackle the growing inequalities and criminal perversions that disfigure the countries bordering the Mediterranean, such as [...] terrorism, state corruption and political expediency'.[909] Situating Khadra within the wider context of the Mediterranean – between East and West – is pertinent as it attests to and encompasses the multiple identities and geographies reflected in his own life and work: East, West, Algerian, Arab, Berber, French, Palestinian, Israeli, Bedouin. In *L'Attentat*, Khadra explores 'the search for a national identity'

[907] *Ibid*., p. 183.
[908] *Ibid*., p. 193.
[909] Claire Gorrara, 'Introduction', in *French Crime Fiction*, ed. by Claire Gorrara (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2009), pp. 1-13 (p. 3).

within the Israeli-Palestinian context through the in-between, unsettled figure of the perceivably integrated Israeli Arab, born in the Occupied Palestinian Territories and of Bedouin heritage with its 'roots' in nomadism.

Alongside Haddad and Colette Fellous (Tunisia), Elias Sanbar (Palestine), and Leïla Sebbar (Algeria), to a name a few, Khadra features in *La Langue française vue de la Méditerranée*, a collection of interviews exploring Mediterranean authors' relationship to the French language: 'langue subie ou langue choisie, langue d'accueil ou d'exil, d'héritage colonial ou d'émancipation individuelle, de travail, d'amour, d'enfance ou de maturité, de résistance, de liberté'.[910] In his interview, Khadra takes issue with the assumption in the question, 'Pour un Algérien, l'héritage colonial est évident, mais par ailleurs pouvez-vous nous dire pourquoi vous écrivez en français?' (particularly with the idea of *héritage*). His response is clear: 'je ne considère pas la langue française comme un héritage, mais comme un acquis. Ce n'est pas un cadeau, c'est quelque chose que nous avons su conquérir par nous-mêmes, parce que nous voulions nous ouvrir au monde'.[911] Here, he subverts the paternalistic idea that Algerians were given the French language by the coloniser, claiming instead that it is

[910] Patrice Martin and Christophe Drevet, 'Avant-propos', in *La Langue française vue de la Méditerranée*, pp. 5-6 (p. 5).
[911] Yasmina Khadra, 'Yasmina Khadra', in *La Langue française vue de la Méditerranée*, p. 86.

Algerian writers who conquered the French language, not least of all in the seductive or 'romantic' sense. Indeed, Khadra speaks of his interaction with French as a *rencontre*, personifying the language, already gendered female in French, as a woman: 'Elle a été très sincère avec moi, très attentive à mes aspirations d'écrivain'.[912] Taking the parallel further, this time through the use of simile and metaphor, he writes about his relationship with the French language *as a relationship*:

> C'est une langue que j'aime, un peu comme une femme qu'on aime. Ce qui importe, c'est l'affection qu'on a pour elle. Il y a beaucoup de mariage mixte qui réussit très bien […]. [C]'est une compagne qui ne m'a jamais quitté, qui m'a appris beaucoup de choses.[913]

There is a sense here of reciprocity, of being enriched by, while himself enriching, the French language – rather than a passive-active or active-passive relationship as suggested through the metaphor of conquest – yet Khadra nevertheless betrays a chauvinist attitude. It is a mixed marriage of sorts which is at the heart of *L'Attentat* – that of a naturalised '[I]sraélien' (*A*, p. 13) and a '[P]alestinienne à part entière' (*A*, p. 232) – but this explosive mix proves to be an impossible match, and the female character

[912] *Ibid*., p. 86.
[913] *Ibid*., p. 87.

remains voiceless but for her incomprehensible act. This raises the issue of silence (and silencing) when it comes to the representation of female characters in texts written by male authors, which is particularly pertinent in this case, where the author took a woman's name as a pseudonym.

Israeli, Bedouin, Arab

Khadra states in his interview with *The Independent* that

> [t]here is a tremendous ignorance in the West about Arab and Islamic culture, whereas in the Orient, both the Bedouin nomad and the terrorist know what's going on over here, what films Westerners watch, how they think. We are in the middle of the worst misunderstanding to befall our two cultures. I wish to take the Western reader into that other world.[914]

Note again the use of the term ignorance, which Khadra sees as his duty to redress. It appears here that Khadra is playing on the all too persistent orientalist view held in the West that pits Arabs of 'the Orient' as either (romanticised) Bedouin nomads or (potential) terrorists. Both are typically male figures, while Arab women are commonly reduced to

[914] Khadra qtd. in Feehily, 'Yasmina Khadra: Tools in the War for Truth' (para 10 of 15).

impenetrable veiled phantom-like figures. In *L'Attentat*, Khadra subverts each of these stereotypes, by depicting an integrated and 'modernised' Bedouin Israeli and an unveiled female terrorist capable of making decisions independent of her husband. According to Said, 'Orientalism is premised [...] on the fact that the Orientalist [...] makes the Orient speak, describes the Orient, renders its mysteries plain for and to the West'.[915] Khadra reclaims this task as his own vocation.

In a similar way to Benaïssa – who declared in my interview with him, '[j]'ai trois cultures. Je suis berbère, arabophone et francophone. Je suis tri-culturel'[916] – Khadra states, 'I have two cultures, Western and Arabic-Berber',[917] hyphenating Arabic and Berber thereby highlighting their interconnectedness in his own identity formation. In another interview, Khadra elaborates on this: 'My roots are Bedouin. I was born into a desert tribe, and I'm North African, Arab-Berber and Muslim'.[918] Although in this interview, he is speaking about his novel on Gaddafi, who was of Bedouin heritage, it is significant in the light

[915] Said, *Orientalism*, pp. 20-21.
[916] Benaïssa qtd. in Vince, '"Je commence là où ça se tait"', p. 7.
[917] Khadra qtd. in Feehily, 'Yasmina Khadra: Tools in the War for Truth' (para 10 of 15).
[918] Yasmina Khadra qtd. in Loraine Adam, 'Fiction keeps me safe from the hardships of real life', *Afrique Magazine*, November 2015, <http://afriquemagazine.com/en/%E2%80%9Cfiction-keeps-me-safe-hardships-real-life%E2%80%9D> [accessed 14 October 2017] (para 6 of 12). Again, note the hyphenated 'Arab-Berber' self-definition.

of *L'Attentat* also. The protagonist Amine is reminded of his Bedouin 'roots' at an Israeli university where he is marginalised and, most significantly, when he returns to the patriarchal home at the end of the novel where he is welcomed with open arms like a lost son. In a similar way to Cham-Nessim in his response to the demolition of the matriarchal home, Amine's Palestinian self-awareness is (re)awakened when the patriarchal home is destroyed at the end of the novel, as a reprisal for his nephew Wissam's suicide attack (*A*, p. 258).

The patriarch is a key figure in *L'Attentat*. The only time Amine can recall having cried before losing his wife is when he lost his grandfather thirty years previously (*A*, p. 79). In the absence of his grandfather, his great uncle takes the place of the patriarch and guardian of memory, and it is the destruction of his home that leads to outrage in the protagonist. Meanwhile, his Jewish colleague Kim's Shoah-surviving grandfather Yehuda is also presented as a patriarch and preserver of memory, carrying 'les horreurs de la Shoah' within him (*A*, p. 81). Abouali describes this as 'le seul sujet qu'il [Yehuda] est capable d'aborder et qui constitue le centre de gravité de son existence'.[919] Thus the intergenerational, postmemory aspect is an important element in the novel: while Kim's grandfather remains haunted by the Shoah,

[919] Abouali, *Yasmina Khadra ou la recherche de la vérité*, p. 83.

which led many Jews to embrace Zionism and seek refuge in Israel, Amine's great uncle symbolises Palestine as *patrie*, the ancestral homeland of the Palestinians, including Bedouins. Yet the Shoah-surviving grandfather's voice is silenced (*A*, p. 82) and the Palestinian patriarchal home is destroyed. In his vain protest to the demolition of the family home, Amine states, 'c'est la maison du patriarche, le repère le plus important de la tribu', and his niece Faten responds, '[c]'est quoi une maison quand on a perdu un pays' (*A*, p. 259), linking Bedouin identity not just to tribal loyalty but also to Palestinian nationalism.

There is an alternative patriarch who is a key figure in the text, revealing a shared Jewish-Palestinian past, prior to the creation of the State of Israel, and suggestive of a possible future two-state scenario with a Jewish minority in Palestine alongside an Arab minority in Israel. This patriarchal figure appears towards the end of the novel, and is a Jewish hermit living in the Occupied Palestinian Territories, who recognises Amine and recalls a time when he worked for the Bedouin patriarch. The hermit's name is Shlomi, deriving from the Hebrew word for peace, *shalom*, which connotes wholeness. As he approaches Amine who is looking out on what was once an unspoiled view but which is now obstructed by the separation barrier erected under Ariel Sharon's premiership, Shlomi begins the conversation by stating that

'Sharon est en train de lire la Torah à l'envers' (*A*, p. 250). He goes on to say that '[Sharon] croit préserver Israël de ses ennemis et ne fait que l'enfermer dans un autre ghetto, moins terrifiant certes mais tout aussi injuste…' (*A*, p. 251). The reference to ghettos here is significant and suggests both enclosure of Jews and injustice towards Palestinians, supposedly cast as 'ennemis' by the State of Israel. Yet Khadra's careful choice of language – opting for the qualifier 'autre' rather than 'nouveau' – ensures differentiation as opposed to equation or supersessionism.[920]

According to Shlomi, '[l]e Juif est né libre comme le vent, imprenable comme le désert de Judée' (*A*, p. 252). Here there is a sense of a nostalgia which is closely linked to the figure of the Bedouin, with orientalist undertones. As Shipler notes in relation to Zionism,

> [t]he desert drew a special bred of Israeli Jew, not one who reveled in the militant nationalism of his country's larger conflict but one who treasured more the marvels of Bedouin culture, the human contact with a people who could perform the miracle of scratching a life out of the vast, spectacular wasteland. A passion for the Bedouin was mixed into a passion for the desert.[921]

[920] See Cheyette, 'Against Supersessionist Thinking', pp. 429, 437, 438.
[921] David Shipler qtd. in Ranen Omer-Sherman, *Israel in Exile: Jewish Writing and the Desert* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2006), p. 362.

Moreover, the reference to Judea, the ancient Biblical term for part of the contemporary West Bank (now occupied by the State of Israel) harks back to an idealised past. Yet the present day reality impedes upon this longed-for freedom. Shlomi goes on: 'S'il [le Juif] a omis de délimiter sa patrie au point qu'on a failli la lui confisquer, c'est parce qu'il a longtemps cru que la Terre promise était d'abord celle où aucun rempart n'empêche son regard de porter plus loin que ses cris' (*A*, p. 252). Here, he suggests that what Memmi termed 'la libération du Juif', which was supposedly fulfilled through the creation of the State of Israel, has failed. Moreover, Amine draws Shlomi's attention to 'les cris des autres' (*A*, p. 252), that is, the Palestinians, who he suggests suffer the cost of this failed liberation.

Amine and Shlomi find common ground in their mutual abhorrence of 'ce Mur' erected by Sharon (*A*, pp. 250-53), which represents both Palestinian oppression and Israeli security against terrorism. In the words of Amine, '[l]es horreurs ne relevant pas uniquement de l'infrastructure' (p. 252). This 'muraille hideuse' (*A*, p. 250) obstructs their view, 'le rampart occultant l'horizon' (*A*, p. 251). The horizon here can be seen as a metaphor for a vision of a shared future, obstructed by this separation barrier. The philosophical, quasi-theological conversation which ensues between Shlomi and Amine is

similar to that which concludes Benaïssa's *L'Avenir oublié*. As Garand writes, Shlomi is 'partisan du dialogue à partir d'une reconnaissance des sources religieuses communes'.[922] To Shlomi's surprise, Amine is familiar with Biblical prophecies and starts quoting from the book of Isaiah. When Shlomi asks, 'Où tu as appris ces versets d'Isaïe?',[923] Amine responds: 'Tout Juif de Palestine est un peu arabe et aucun Arabe d'Israël ne peut prétendre ne pas être un peu juif' (*A*, p. 253). It is interesting that the 'pays' rather than the 'nationalités' are referred to here, while Jews and Arabs float between the two. This passage is key, as it depicts a Palestinian Jew (Shlomi) and an Israeli Arab (Amine) engaging in dialogue with one another, and yet they are isolated figures in the grand scheme of things. Regarding the character of Shlomi, and focusing on the religious aspect, Abouali writes:

> Son appartenance religieuse le condamne à l'isolement puisqu'il vit parmi des Arabes musulmans et son penchant pacifiste l'exclut de la communauté israélienne ou du moins de l'opinion politique officielle de l'Etat hébreux. Cette position inconfortable, il la partage avec le couple Amine et Sihem Jaafari. Ces

[922] Garand, 'Que peut la fiction?', p. 46.
[923] There is a shift from the formal 'vous' to the more friendly 'tu' form in the course of their conversation.

> derniers sont en effet des musulmans vivant dans un Etat juif.[924]

The two characters of Shlomi and Amine share a sense of non-belonging and being out of their comfort zone, while remaining committed to a pacifist worldview, suggesting the possibility of an alternative future.

Justifying his choice of Bedouin identity for the protagonist in *L'Attentat*, Khadra speaks of 'the tradition, the authenticity and the philosophy that accompanies their [Bedouins'] lives', in an almost orientalist fashion, and yet goes on to say that '[Amine] is my image for all Arabs'.[925] The specific Bedouin identity sits within a broader Arab identity, which includes Palestinians and Algerians (in solidarity). Khadra's choice of the figure of the Bedouin for his first-person narrator, therefore, is not an arbitrary one, particularly in the context of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. As Isma'el Abu-Sa'ad notes,

> Throughout the Middle East, the desert-dwelling Bedouin have formed an important component of Arab society. As Arab society in general is undergoing many changes, no community has been so dramatically affected as that of the Bedouin. This is particularly true of the Palestinian

[924] Abouali, *Yasmina Khadra ou la recherche de la vérité*, p. 83.
[925] Khadra qtd. in Pinto, 'A Man Named Yasmina' (para 26 of 26).

> Bedouin Arab community in Israel. In addition to the changes brought about by the general processes of modernisation, this community has also been greatly affected by the establishment of the state of Israel in 1948, and the subsequent transformation of the existing Palestinian Arab population into a minority in the Western-oriented, Jewish state.[926]

Amine is illustrative of this transformation process, as an indigenous Palestinian Bedouin who becomes naturalised as an Israeli, thus joining the 'Israeli Arab community' (a minority group in the Jewish state), and who lives in the Western-oriented capital of Tel Aviv.[927] The internal outsider and floating subject of the Bedouin, claimed by both Israelis and Palestinians to belong to their respective nations and patriotic endeavours, has long been associated with nomadism and hospitality, rootlessness, and closeness to the land.

Ranen Omer-Sherman confesses in *Israel in Exile: Jewish Writing and the Desert*,

> After experiencing the ancient tradition of Bedouin hospitality – *Karwat al Deif* is the most sacred

[926] Isma'el Abu-Sa'ad, 'Forced Sedentarisation, Land Rights and Indigenous Resistance: The Palestinain Bedouin in the Negev', in *Catastrophe Remembered: Palestine, Israel and the Internal Refugees (Essays in Memory of Edward Said)*, ed. by Nur Masalha (London; New York: Zed Books, 2005), pp. 113-141 (p. 113).
[927] Byman, *A High Price*, p. 129.

> tenet of that society in which one is hosted generously, as long as three days with no questions asked – I was thrilled to realize that I had participated in a social ritual that extends back to the Abraham's encounter with three wayfarers who later prove to be emissaries of God.[928]

Similarly, Shipler writes of 'the patriarch Abraham [...] who followed an elaborate ritual of hospitality now practiced in precisely the same way in Bedouin encampments, where the stranger is welcomed effusively, fed lavishly, and protected'.[929] Referring to this Abrahamic story, recorded in Genesis 18:6-8 and to which Omer-Sherman alludes, Shipler writes romantically, '[a]nyone who has encountered Bedouin hospitality will recognize these Old Testament verses as familiar portraits of a durable tradition'.[930] The irony of how this hospitality has been reconfigured in relation to the Zionist movement and Bedouins in Israel can be seen in the French word 'hôte', meaning both host and guest. In *L'Attentat*, Amine, the would-be hospitable Bedouin, becomes the provisional guest of the State of Israel. What was his ancestral homeland becomes his second home, offered (on condition of loyalty) but not a given.

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[928] Omer-Sherman, *Israel in Exile*, p. 23. Here, Omer-Sherman is referring to Genesis 18:6-8. See Shipler, *Arab and Jew* (2015), p. 443.
[929] Shipler, *Arab and Jew* (2015), p. 442.
[930] *Ibid*., p. 443.

Paradoxically, Bedouins inspired early Zionist pioneers, who were mostly Eastern European but sought, as seen in the first chapter, to create a 'new Jew' connected to the (specific) land. In 'Re-Orientalizing the Jew: Zionist and Contemporary Israeli Masculinities', Yaron Peleg writes that 'the Arab culture they encountered in Palestine, especially that of the Bedouins, inspired early Zionist pioneers to adopt some of its features in their attempts to forge a New Hebrew culture from scratch'.[931] And yet, Peleg goes on to write,

> [t]he direct influence of Bedouin culture did not last long after the new Jewish community in Palestine grew to a size that was sufficiently large to antagonize local Arabs and instigate what later came to be known as the Arab-Israeli Conflict.[932]

This antagonism is experienced by Amine in *L'Attentat* whose very identity as an Arab Israeli (with 'local' Bedouin roots) is conflicted in the contemporary context of the so-called Arab-Israeli conflict.

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[931] Yaron Peleg, 'Re-Orientalizing the Jew: Zionist and Contemporary Israeli Masculinities', in *Orientalism, Gender, and the Jews: Literary and Artistic Transformations*, ed. by Ulricke Brunotte, Anna-Dorothea Ludewig, and Axel Stähler (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2015), pp. 176-94 (p. 182). Peleg writes that 'of these features, the Bedouin culture of combat, the Bedouin dress code as well as the Arabic language, were especially attractive to Zionist pioneers'. *Ibid.*

[932] Peleg, 'Re-Orientalizing the Jew', p. 183.

In terms of Orientalism, Omer-Sherman writes,

> (often resembling the discourse of early Zionists), the English travel writers extolled the Bedouins, whose timeless poverty transformed them into uncorrupt [*sic*] and mythic embodiments of the virtues of abstinence and self-denial that were rapidly decaying at home in the seat of empire.[933]

Omer-Sherman goes on to quote from Shipler's interview with Clinton (Yitzhak) Bailey, 'the most highly regarded Israeli scholar of Bedouin life' according to Omer-Sherman.[934] In the interview with Shipler, Bailey declares that '[a]mong Bedouins I find a tremendous lack of materialism, and emphasis on social values, which definitely takes predominance over material values'.[935] As Omer-Sherman notes, '[m]ost striking here is Bailey's unspoken but implied rebuke of his own culture for its uncritical embrace of materialism and his idealistic approval of the ethics of the [Bedouin] Other'.[936] By contrast, in *L'Attentat*, Amine is depicted as materialistic, living in a chic district of Tel Aviv, where, as Harrison notes, he and his wife led 'the relatively privileged lives of

[933] Omer-Sherman, *Israel in Exile*, p. 19.
[934] *Ibid*., p. 20.
[935] Clinton (Yitzhak) Bailey qtd. in Omer-Sherman, *Israel in Exile*, p. 20. See Shipler, *Arab and Jew* (2015), p. 483.
[936] Omer-Sherman, *Israel in Exile*, p. 21.

"assimilated" Palestinians' before Sihem committed the suicide attack.[937] Spencer evocatively describes Amine's blissful ignorance prior to the attack as living in 'a kind of gated milieu from which anything potentially disconcerting – his Bedouin origins, the racism that pervades Israeli society and the seething discontent of that society's victims [i.e. the Palestinians] – has been barred entry'.[938] Amine's ethics, although steeped in a humanist and humanitarian worldview – connected to his vocation as 'a successful doctor who lives in a posh, all-Jewish neighborhood'[939] – are called into question by his seeming willing ignorance of Palestinian suffering. As O'Rourke notes, 'Amin[e] is a non-practising Muslim, thirsty for success and material prosperity, who wants to live a life free of conflict and sees himself as apolitical – as a healer, a surgeon'.[940] Yet he is in denial of the political situation and of his identity as a Palestinian, an identity which is defined by conflict and (sometimes armed) struggle.

Today, while Bedouins in the Negev maintain their traditional lifestyle and tend to have more of a connection to Palestinian identity, Bedouins in Northern Israel and the Galilee region in particular have been

[937] Olivia Harrison, 'For a Transcolonial Reading of the Contemporary Algerian Novel', *Contemporary French and Francophone Studies*, 20 (2016), 102-10 (p. 106).
[938] Spencer, 'Reading Lolita in Tel Aviv', pp. 406-7.
[939] Harrison, 'For a Transcolonial Reading of the Contemporary Algerian Novel', p. 106.
[940] O'Rourke, *Representing Jihad*, p. 76.

'modernised' and 'assimilated' into Israeli society, living in houses rather than tents, with some even volunteering to join the Israeli Defence Forces, as seen in the previous chapter. According to Shipler, Bedouins, along with Druse, are 'adept at deferring to the dominant group in whatever part of the Middle East they happen to be'.[941] In *L'Attentat*, the first-person narrator Amine is an extreme version of the assimilated Bedouin, as a naturalised Israeli citizen and esteemed, wealthy surgeon living in urban Tel Aviv, the capitalist, secular, cosmopolitan capital of Israel, in which Israeli Jews are the dominant group to which he defers. Indeed, Amine bears little resemblance to the quintessential Bedouin of the desert, linked to what Rebecca Stein terms 'the trope of emptiness', which draws from the colonial idea of Palestine as 'empty land'.[942] This is connected to the nomadism of Bedouins who traditionally did not own property but roamed the desert, setting up temporary camps near places of water, but who only formed part of the indigenous Palestinian population. Referring to Stein's concept, Omer-Sherman writes that '"[e]mptiness," in this narrative, was the mark of the premodern – the sign of a place outside time and history, waiting, indeed beckoning, for Western intervention and development', and goes on to situate Tel Aviv

[941] Shipler, *Arab and Jew* (2015), p. 541.
[942] Rebecca Stein qtd. in Omer-Sherman, *Israel in Exile*, p. 25.

within this narrative of progress and modernisation: 'The founding of Tel Aviv was enunciated through [t]his story – that of a European city born out of sand, "an outpost of civilization against barbarism," in Herzl's troubling language'.[943] It is therefore significant that Amine, a child of the desert, is not only 'naturalised' as an Israeli citizen but 'civilised' by virtue of living and working in Tel Aviv, a (Western) 'European city' in the so-called 'Middle East'. As Raz-Krakotzkin points out, '[t]he relation West/East is one of the central axes that constitute Israeli culture and shape its cultural and political borders', and 'Israelo-Zionist discourse' is often connected to 'Eurocentric identification'.[944]

Here it is worth considering Amine's self-definition alongside othering designations in the course of *L'Attentat*. In the first chapter, Amine introduces himself in passing, referring first to his Israeli identity ('[a]vant de me naturaliser israélien'), then to his medical profession as a 'chirugien', and finally to his filiation as 'un fils de bédouin' (*A*, p. 13). The order of these self-definitions is significant, and it is worth noting that 'palestinien' does not feature here, although he was born on so-called 'Palestinian territory'. The designation 'Arabe' arrives later, in juxtaposition to the female Jewish Israeli students at university, Amine's future colleague Kim an exception to

[943] Omer-Sherman, *Israel in Exile*, p. 25.
[944] Raz-Krakotzkin, 'Orientalism, Jewish Studies and Israeli Society', p. 240.

the apparent rule of racism: '[Kim] ne s'attardait pas là où les autres étudiantes retournaient sept fois la langue dans la bouche avant de demander du feu à un Arabe' (*A*, pp. 15-16). The designation appears again when Amine is treating a patient who apparently cannot distinguish between Arabs and terrorists, having just survived the attack, and therefore cannot bear to be treated by an Arab doctor. The scene, which also appears in the film, is described in the novel from the Arab doctor's narrative point of view:

> En une fraction de seconde, ses traits congestionnés se défont de leur douleur et cèdent la place à une expression démente, faite de rage froide et de dégoût. Au moment où je me penche sur lui, il me menace des yeux et retrousse les lèvres sur une grimace outrée.
>
> — Je ne veux pas qu'un Arabe me touche, grogne-t-il en me repoussant d'une main hargneuse. Plutôt crever (*A*, p. 22).

He proceeds to spit on the doctor as if to say 'sale Arabe'. The action of spurning and the change in 'le regard' of the patient is significant, and contrasts to the nurse's reaction on seeing the doctor, her colleague and superior:

> Ses yeux s'illuminent lorsqu'elle m'aperçoit.

> — Vite, vite, docteur Amine... (*A*, p. 21).

The patient is unwilling, if not unable, to look past Amine's facial features and Arab identity to his professional status and skills as an Israeli surgeon. Similarly, in the eyes of one of his Jewish Israeli colleagues, Ilan Ros, and 'en dépit de mes compétences de chirurgien et de mes aptitudes relationnelles aussi bien dans la profession que dans la ville', 'je reste l'Arabe – indissociable du bougnoule de service et, à un degré moindre, de l'ennemi potentiel' (*A*, p. 89). Without in any way justifying Ilan Ros' racism, the narrator provides an explanation: 'Il a perdu son frère cadet […] dans une embuscade au sud du Liban […]. Il ne s'en est jamais remis' (*A*, p. 89). Again, 'the interconnectedness of different perpetrators and different victims in overlapping, yet distinct, scenarios of extreme violence' comes to the fore,[945] although this colleague fails to recognise the difference and distinctiveness, grouping all Arabs in the category of potential enemy due to his own traumatic experience. In the title of his book *Enemies and Neighbours: Arabs and Jews in Palestine and Israel, 1917-2017*, Ian Black evokes this tense relationship where neighbours (in this case, colleagues) are seen as potential enemies.[946]

[945] Rothberg, *Multidirectional Memory*, p. 96.
[946] Ian Black, *Enemies and Neighbours: Arabs and Jews in Palestine and Israel, 1917-2017* (London : Allen Lane, 2017).

On returning home via a route close to the scene of the attack, Amine is questioned by Israeli police officers and once again racially set apart. Upon shining his light on Amine, the first police officer 'fait un léger bond en arrière et porte son autre main à son pistolet' (*A*, pp. 25-26). This reaction is described as an instinctive one, and is followed by a similar *méfiance* in the second police officer:

> Le deuxième flic promène à son tour sa lampe sur moi, me dévisage d'un œil torve, méfiant.
>
> — Vos papiers!
>
> Je les lui tends. Il les vérifie, reporte sa torche sur mon visage. Mon nom arabe le chiffonne. C'est toujours ainsi après un attentat. Les flics sont sur les nerfs, et les faciès suspects exacerbent leurs susceptibilités (p. 26).

This combination of racial designation (through profiling) and name identification sets Amine apart as 'the Arab' and therefore as a perceived threat and potential terrorist, the Arab perpetrator pitted against the Jewish Israeli victim. The irony of course is that Amine, an Israeli citizen, was treating patients who were victims of a bomb attack, and yet '[j]'avais beau présenter mes papiers et décliner ma profession, les flics n'avaient d'yeux que pour mon faciès' (*A*, p. 27). Although Amine contextualises the Israeli

policemen's racist distrust – '[c]'est toujours ainsi après un attentat' – the fact that the policeman jumps back 'instinctivement' on seeing Amine's facial features suggests an underlying racism which is aroused rather than caused by the terrorist attack.

Assimilation and Ethno-nationalism

Julia Resnik argues that both France and Israel have 'strong assimilationist traditions' and 'homogenous national identities', though they differ in their approach; while France has opted for 'universal laïcité', she argues, Israel is characterised by 'ethno-nationalism'.[947] Political geographer Oren Yiftachel's seminal book *Ethnocracy: Land and Identity Politics in Israel/Palestine* (2006) rests on the argument that the current regime in Israel and the West Bank is one 'premised on a main project of ethnonational *expansion* and control and on a parallel self-representation of the system as democratic'.[948] He explains how ethnonationalism combines the political concepts of post-Westphalian sovereign states and ethnic self-determination and goes on to define Israel as an ethnocratic state characterised by 'ethnocentric nationalism'.[949] Yiftachel situates the Palestinian Arab

[947] Resnik, 'Integration Without Assimilation?', p. 202.
[948] Oren Yiftachel, *Ethnocracy: Land and Identity Politics in Israel/Palestine* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2006), p. 5.
[949] *Ibid*., p. 13, p. 160.

minority within what he calls the ethnocratic state of Israel, which defines them as Arab Israelis:

> the Palestinian Arab minority in Israel [...] embodies the tensions and possibilities of the Israeli regime: a nominal commitment to democracy; structural and daily marginalization by an expanding ethnocratic state; long-term collective involvement with the ongoing Zionist-Palestinian struggles; and a process of identity formation, which is strongly influenced by the forces highlighted above.[950]

Ali Suliman, the actor who plays Amine in the film adaptation of *L'Attentat*, reveals the contradictions of such an identity. After introducing himself as being from Nazareth in the Galilee region of modern-day Israel, he states in an interview, 'I don't identify myself as an Israeli, because I'm not, I am a Palestinian'.[951] He goes on to say, '[I] play in both languages, in Arabic and in Hebrew, and in Israeli movies [...] because I am part of this country'.[952] The self-definitions 'I am a Palestinian' and 'I am part of this country [Israel]' are held in tension, as his national(ist) identity and citizenship contradict one another, thus revealing what Nihad Boqa'i

[950] *Ibid*., p. 159.
[951] Ali Suliman, 'I am Ali Suliman (2011)', *YouTube*, 25 August 2011, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iU0VP01H_-Q> [accessed 16 October 2017].
[952] *Ibid*.

describes as 'the paradox of Israeli citizenship and Palestinian national identity for Palestinians inside Israel'.[953] Interestingly, the character Sihem is played in the film by a Jewish Israeli whose parents are Moroccan and she can thus be seen as an Arab Jew acting the role of an Arab Israeli.

It is worth analysing the homogenising and assimilationist frameworks of national identity formation adopted in Israel and France in terms of citizenship, which is granted to those born in France regardless of ethnicity and can be gained through naturalisation. For Khadra, citizenship transcends (religious and national) identity. Referring to the Paris marches following the Charlie Hebdo attacks, he writes that 'ce n'est pas l'identité qui fait une nation, c'est la citoyenneté'.[954] This he sees reflected in the diversity of religious identities present during the marches in which he participated and which he saw as 'un appel de la citoyenneté'.[955] Khadra calls for a multicultural, rather than a homogenous, approach to citizenship while maintaining the French model of *laïcité*. For Khadra, 'universal laïcité' is not a 'homogenous national identity', but rather a way of

[953] Nihad Boqa'i, 'Patterns of Internal Displacement, Social Adjustment and Return', in *Catastrophe Remembered: Palestine, Israel and the Internal Refugees (Essays in Memory of Edward Said)*, ed. by Nur Masalha (London; New York: Zed Books, 2005), pp. 73-112 (p. 86).
[954] Khadra in interview with Rowland, 'Yasmina Khadra: "A Battle of Extremes"'.
[955] *Ibid*.

facilitating the cohabitation of heterogeneous (religious) identities within the same national citizenship. A self-affirmed multiculturalist, Khadra argues that multicultural coexistence is the future of humanity,[956] and therefore rejects the homogenous approach. In *L'Attentat*, he demonstrates through fiction how multiculturalism and mutual understanding in Israel are threatened by instances of Israeli racism, injustice towards Palestinians, and a character case study of Palestinian fundamentalism.

In Israel, citizenship is granted to all Jews regardless of where they were born, as well as to Muslim and Christian Arabs born in Israel.[957] To those who do not fit into either of these categories, citizenship can be gained in Israel through naturalisation, which is dependent upon a number of factors, including entitlement to reside permanently in Israel. In Khadra's *L'Attentat*, while Sihem is granted Israeli citizenship 'by virtue of' being born in Kafr Kanna, an Arab village in the Galilee region of modern-day Israel, Amine has to earn it through naturalisation, hence his desire '[d']être titularisé' as a young surgeon (*A*, p. 13). Another requirement of naturalisation is that, according to Israel's Nationality Law, '[p]rior to the grant of nationality, the applicant shall make the following

[956] *Ibid*.
[957] *Nationality Law, 5712-1952*, 1 April 1952, <http://www.israellawresourcecenter.org/israellaws/fulltext/nationalitylaw.htm> [accessed 1 April 2015].

declaration: "I declare that I will be a loyal national of the State of Israel"'.[958]

As McManus notes, the French reader can relate to Khadra's protagonist Amine not only in that he is 'an educated and liberal individual', but also in that he is 'a secular man who experiences "equal delight" when he stands before Jerusalem's monuments to Judaism, Christianity, and Islam'.[959] What McManus fails to mention is that Amine self-defines as a Muslim, albeit a secular one: 'je n'affiche ma religiosité nulle part' (*A*, p. 104). Non-Muslim French readers can relate to his Muslim identity in so much as it conforms to *laïcité* and is understood in terms of humanist values such as the dignity of life, reinforced by his profession as a doctor, thus Amine can be seen as a 'good Muslim'. As O'Rourke notes, '"good" Muslim has come to mean "moderate" and neoliberal and "bad" Muslim has come to mean "radical" or jihadist'.[960] Writing in the aftermath of 9/11, Mahmood Mamdani observes the shift from the sensationalist 'all Muslims are terrorists' claim, put forward by the media in the immediate aftermath of the attack, to the supposedly more generous 'good Muslims vs. bad Muslims' narrative:

> we are now told to distinguish between good Muslims and bad Muslims [...] not between good and

[958] *Ibid*.
[959] McManus, 'Sentimental Terror Narratives', p. 92.
[960] O'Rourke, *Representing Jihad*, p. 13.

> bad persons, nor between criminals and civic citizens, who both happen to be Muslims, but between good Muslims and bad Muslims. We are told that there is a fault line running through Islam, a line that separates moderate Islam, called "genuine Islam," from extremist political Islam.[961]

Mamdani claims that 'Islam is today the banner for diverse and contradictory political projects', distinguishing between 'anti-imperialist Islamist movements' (Hamas would presumably come under this category) and 'imperialist projects' (like Al Qaeda or, more recently, the so-called Islamic State), both of which 'carry the banner of Islam'.[962] As O'Rourke notes, 'the emergence of Islamism as a political movement is connected to anti-colonial and anti-imperialist sentiments and projects and the internal struggle of Muslims for self-identity'.[963] Within this logic, suicide bombings in the Second Intifada are cast as 'violent acts of resistance to imperial occupation'.[964] One of the 'moudjahidin' (*A*, p. 163) in *L'Attentat* puts it this way: 'Nous ne sommes ni des islamistes ni des intégristes […]. Nous ne sommes que les enfants d'un peuple spolié et bafoué qui se

[961] Mahmood Mamdani, 'Good Muslim, Bad Muslim: A Political Perspective on Culture and Terrorism', *American Anthropologist*, 104 (2002), 766-75 (p. 767).
[962] *Ibid*., p. 774.
[963] O'Rourke, *Representing Jihad*, pp. 6-7.
[964] Morton, 'Terrorism, Orientalism and Imperialism', p. 36.

battent avec les moyens du bord pour recouvrer leur patrie' (*A*, p. 166).[965]

In his interview following the Charlie Hebdo attacks, Khadra is careful to distinguish between the religious ideology of Islamism, which he considers to be manmade, and the religion of Islam, which he perceives to be a cosmic phenomenon.[966] As Mamdani writes, 'coexistence and toleration have been the norm, rather than the exception, in the political history of Islam'.[967] The majority of Muslims, Khadra argues, are 'brave, généreux, accueillant, aimant, fraternel' – in short, moderate – and Amine fits decidedly into this category. In this way, Khadra can be seen to advocate the French model of 'universal laïcité' within Israel – as part of a 'démocratie à venir' to use Derrida's phrase – while suggesting that the conflict can take on ideological as well as religious forms.[968] As Abouali notes, 'l'islam chez l'auteur [...] [est] une religion de modération'.[969]

Speaking within the context of the Charlie Hebdo attacks in France, Khadra identifies two ways of reacting to exclusion

[965] In *Le Petit Robert*, 'moudjahid' is a synonym of 'dihadiste', coming from the Arabic meaning 'combattant de la guerre sainte', and is thus defined as a '[c]ombattant d'une armée de libération islamique'. Definition of 'moudjahid' in *Le Petit Robert*.

[966] Khadra in interview with Rowland, 'Yasmina Khadra: "A Battle of Extremes"'.

[967] Mamdani, 'Good Muslim, Bad Muslim', p. 768.

[968] See Derrida, *Voyous*, pp. 120, 132. See also Giovanna Borradori, *Philosophy in a Time of Terror: Dialogue with Jürgen Habermas and Jacques Derrida* (Chicago; London: University of Chicago Press, 2003), p. 120.

[969] Abouali, *Yasmina Khadra ou la recherche de la vérité*, p. 300.

within society: 'soit on est dans le pire, ce qui traduit un petit peu ce que se passe dans cette intégrisme, soit on cherche à donner le meilleur de soi'.[970] If this theory were to be applied to *L'Attentat*, Sihem could be seen to opt for 'intégrisme' over integration, willingly excluding herself from the Israeli society which accepts her as a citizen, and instead associating herself with the suffering Palestinian people, seeing it as her duty to sacrifice herself for the 'Cause'. Amine, meanwhile, embodies Khadra's philosophy of overcoming, seen most clearly in his reaction to anti-Arab sentiment when studying medicine at university: 'Conscient des stéréotypes qui m'exposent sur la place publique, je m'évertue à les surmonter un à un, offrant le meilleur de moi-même et prenant sur moi les incartades de mes camarades juifs' (*A*, pp. 104-5). Thus '[t]he ethno-national model of citizenship prevailing in Israel',[971] which separates the Arab minority from the Jewish majority is reflected at university level, and Amine finds himself representing '*ma* communauté' against his will: '[j]e n'avais même pas besoin d'être mandaté par les *miens*; le regard des *autres* me désignait d'office à cette mission ingrate et félonne' (*A*, p. 105, original emphasis). As Abouali notes, '[l]e soulignement par le narrateur montre clairement la prise de

[970] Khadra in interview with Rowland, 'Yasmina Khadra: "A Battle of Extremes"'.
[971] Resnik, 'Integration Without Assimilation?', p. 204.

distance par rapport aux appartenances qui condamnent les êtres à s'inscrire fatalement dans une logique de définition par la négation'.[972] To employ Sartrean terms, Amine is portrayed as a victim of nihilation and otherisation through his internal negation as a Bedouin Arab in the gaze of a predominately Jewish Israeli society.[973] Yet he is also self-nihilating in that he refuses any Palestinian identity or heritage, which comes with responsibility not just to the Bedouin community but to Palestinians in particular and as a whole. His wife, meanwhile, who self-defines as a Palestinian Arab though born in Israel, (an)nihilates herself (and the other) on her own terms.

According to Resnik, '[t]he ethno-national model of citizenship prevailing in Israel […] recognises two separate collective entities – a Jewish majority and an Arab minority'.[974] The various acts of anti-Arab racism described in *L'Attentat* support this claim, yet the protagonist's own affiliation with Israeli nationality in spite of his Arab Bedouin filiation challenges the homogenous ethno-nationalist model, as does the multicultural space of the hospital, where Jews and Arabs work side by side. From the novel's outset, and also in the film adaptation, Amine is depicted as a law-abiding citizen

[972] Abouali, *Yasmina Khadra ou la recherche de la vérité*, p. 234.
[973] See Jean-Paul Sartre, *L'Être et le néant: essai d'ontologie phénoménologique* (Paris: Gallimard, 1980 [1943]).
[974] Resnik, 'Integration Without Assimilation?', p. 204.

contributing to Israeli society through his profession as a surgeon, which is depicted as a way of expressing his loyalty by 'giving back' to the state which 'granted' him citizenship. In the film adaptation, his successful integration is symbolised in the prize ceremony in which he receives the Prix de la réussite médicale Bar Eliezer on behalf of La Société israélienne des chirugiens, and Amine acknowledges this in his speech: 'c'est la première fois qu'un Arabe remporte ce prix'.[975] This is depicted as a sign of progress, not only for Arabs but also for Israel as a nation (although it could be perceived as positive discrimination towards the 'token Arab'). Amine does however acknowledge in his speech, albeit through euphemism, that anti-Arab racism still exists before going on to speak about the benefits of Israeli citizenship: 'On me demande souvent comment c'est de vivre dans ce pays. Je ne vais pas vous mentir, il y a eu des moments où j'ai ressenti de la colère et de l'hostilité'.[976]

Despite instances of anti-Arab racism, Amine acknowledges that if it were not for his Israeli citizenship, a sign of his acceptance into Israeli society, he would not have been able to progress so successfully in his medical career. After referring to the racist hostility and anger with which he is sometimes met in Israeli society, he continues his ceremony

[975] *L'Attentat*, dir. by Ziad Doueiri (Doha Film Institute – Scope Pictures, 2012). Scene One.
[976] *Ibid*.

speech with an outburst of gratitude to the state:

> Et un jour, vous recevez une lettre qui vous annonce l'obtention d'une bourse. Et on vous propose un poste dans l'un des meilleurs centres hospitaliers, une maison. Et celui que vous considérez comme un ennemi se trouve allongé sur votre table d'opération. N'est-ce pas le moment de réévaluer vos certitudes?[977]

Here, the verb *proposer* depicts Israel as benefactor, and Amine as beneficiary, a paternalistic trope. As Resnik notes, 'as the official state of the Jewish people, Israel […] has always encouraged the arrival of Jewish immigrants, who are granted citizenship almost automatically'.[978] Amine, on the other hand, had to earn his status as citizen, which is not taken for granted by virtue of his filiation, for he is an Arab Bedouin and not a Jew. It is important to note, however, that for Amine his tribal identity does not contradict his national identity. The fact that he is of Bedouin, essentially nomadic, descent does not stand in the way of his Israeli citizenship; for him it is not familial betrayal but societal progress. Not perceiving himself to be Palestinian, and driven by ambition to be a doctor rather than a connection to the patriarchal land over which his grandfather reigned (*A*, p. 106), he strives

[977] *Ibid*.
[978] Resnik, 'Integration Without Assimilation?', p. 204.

his way through university 'pour mériter mon statut de citoyen à part entière' (*A*, p. 105). Having earned this status, he benefits from the social standing which comes with his job as a trusted Israeli surgeon in a leading hospital. The choice of the name Amine is perhaps not unintentional: it means faithful or trustworthy in Arabic; thus he is loyal to the Israeli state, fulfilling the oath. Indeed, Abouali picks up on this: '[s]on prénom [Amine] signifie loyal et digne de confiance [...]. Le héros semble en effet se conformer à cette description d'autant plus qu'il a toujours refusé de prendre un parti dans le conflit israélo-palestinien'.[979]

Having Israeli citizenship and benefiting from her husband's social and financial standing as a doctor, Amine's wife's decision to commit a terrorist attack against Israeli civilians is seen as not only shocking, but illogical and ungrateful, and therefore incomprehensible. In the words of Amine's interrogator,

> il faut impérativement que je sache comment une femme appréciée par son entourage, belle et intelligente, moderne, bien intégrée, choyée par son mari et adulée par ses amies en majorité juives, a pu, du jour au lendemain, se bourrer d'explosifs et se rendre dans un lieu public remettre en question tout ce que l'État d'Israël a confié aux Arabes qu'il a accueillis en son sein (*A*, pp. 55-56).

[979] Abouali, *Yasmina Khadra ou la recherche de la vérité*, p. 259.

As Abouali notes, Sihem 'incarne avec son épou[x] […] la meilleure de toutes les intégrations possibles';[980] she is the very embodiment of successful integration. Interestingly, in the English translation, 'bien intégrée' is rendered 'thoroughly assimilated', which suggests becoming like as well as being included in the wider Israeli society, not in a multicultural capacity.[981]

From early Zionism, 'the Arabs were in the category of guests in the Jewish national home',[982] whereas these Arabs were living in the land for generations before Israel was founded as a nation-state. This paternalistic narrative of benevolence persists when it comes to Arab Israelis, many of whom self-identify as Palestinians with Israeli passports. In the quote above, the incredulity is particularly strong (for the Israeli police officer and, I would suggest, the French reader) because Sihem would have fitted into the category of 'good Muslim', in that she does not fulfil the Muslim stereotype as negatively conceived: she does not wear a veil; she does not have 'too many' children (indeed, she has none); she is not an extremist; on the contrary, she is a modern woman, well-dressed and well-read (not 'traditional', illiterate, or 'stupid'); she even has Jewish

[980] *Ibid*., p. 69.
[981] Yasmina Khadra, *The Attack*, trans. by John Cullen (London: Vintage, 2007 [2006]), p. 48.
[982] Oz Almog, *The Sabra: The Creation of the New Jew*, trans. by Haim Watzman (Berkley; Los Angeles; London: University of California Press, 2000), p. 194.

friends. As Abouali writes, '[elle] profite du respect et de l'estime de tous ceux qui l'entourent […], elle occupe une position enviable'.[983] The use of verbs here is striking, and points to Sihem's sense of discomfort and unease within the comfort of her Israeli home; she is all too aware that she is profiting from a system which occupies Palestinian territories, and as such can be seen as an 'implicated subject'. This concept, developed by Rothberg and touched upon in previous chapters of this thesis, refers to the 'large and heterogeneous collection of subjects who enable and benefit from traumatic violence without taking part in it directly',[984] in other words subjects which do not fit within the neat binary of victim-perpetrator which up until now has dominated Western trauma theory discourse.[985] The irony is that, identifying with the Palestinian victims of structural violence, Sihem becomes a perpetrator of traumatic violence, with the aim to dismantle the state which provided her

[983] Abouali, *Yasmina Khadra ou la recherche de la vérité*, p. 69.

[984] Rothberg, 'Trauma Theory, Implicated Subjects, and the Question of Israel/Palestine' (para 3 of 10).

[985] Elsewhere, Rothberg writes, 'I use the deliberately open-ended term "implication" in order to gather together various modes of historical relation that do not necessarily fall under the more direct forms of participation associated with traumatic events, such as victimisation and perpetration'. Michael Rothberg, 'Multidirectional Memory and the Implicated Subject: On Sebald and Kentridge', in *Performing Memory in Art and Popular Culture*, ed. by Liedeke Plate and Anneke Smelik (New York: Routledge, 2013), pp. 39-58 (p. 40). See also Rothberg, 'Preface: Beyond Tancred and Clorinda—Trauma Studies for Implicated Subjects', in *The Future of Trauma Theory: Contemporary Literary and Cultural Criticism*, ed. by Gert Buelens, Sam Durrant, and Robert Eaglestone (London; New York: Routledge, 2014), pp. xi-xviii.

shelter, while targeting civilians who become victims in turn.

Paternalism and Patriotism

In the light of Israel's apparent generosity, as a host country which entrusts its Arab citizens with professional status and social standing, Sihem's violent act is seen as inconceivable. By extension, Amine is treated as a complicit traitor and ungrateful guest in outbursts of anti-Arab racism by ultra-orthodox Israeli Jews in his neighbourhood: '« Sale terroriste! Fumier! Traître d'Arabe! » […] « C'est comme ça qu'on dit merci chez vous, sale Arabe? En mordant la main qui vous tire de la merde? … »' (*A*, p. 64). The derogatory term 'sale Arabe' recalls the racist insults listed by Jean-Paul Sartre in his preface to Fanon's *Les Damnés de la terre*: 'des discours racistes, sale nègre, sale juif, sale raton', the latter referring to Maghrebis as a subcategory of Arabs.[986] Similarly, Chouraqui writes in his fictionalised *Lettre à un ami arabe*, specifically in the context of 1930s Paris, that

> nous entendions presque chaque jour injurier « les Juifs », comme nous découvrîmes le racisme antiarabe: les Nord-Africains étaient appelés des « ratons », des « bicots », de même que les Noirs étaient des « macaques

[986] Jean-Paul Sartre, 'Préface', in *Les Damnés de la terre*, pp. 37-61 (p. 56).

> » et nous [les Juifs] des « youpins » […] les balayures du monde.[987]

He later elaborates on this: 'Là aussi, nous nous retrouvions profondément frères. Nous étions également à plaindre, toi le « bicot » et moi qui représentais pour la horde des antisémites, ceux-là même qui te haïssaient, le « sale Juif »'.[988] Thus he draws a parallel between 'le racisme antiarabe' and 'l'antisémitisme', both orientalist discourses. Indeed, it is important to note that 'sale Arabe' is synonymous with '[s]ale terroriste' in contemporary anti-Arab racism, which has its roots in colonialism.[989]

The insults continue for Amine: '« Regarde le château que tu occupes, fils de pute. Qu'est-ce qu'il vous faut de plus pour apprendre à dire merci? »' (*A*, p. 64). There is a sense that Amine's citizenship is a (temporary) privilege rather than a (permanent) right, something for which he should be thankful rather than take for granted. This is demonstrated most clearly in the suggestion of some of the hospital staff 'que l'on me déchoie de ma nationalité israélienne' (*A*, p. 89). Here the multicultural potential of the hospital space falls apart as Amine is ostracised. The assumption is that he has been disloyal to the state as, according to

[987] Chouraqui, *Lettre à un ami arabe*, pp. 61, 70.
[988] *Ibid*., p. 111.
[989] See Benjamin Stora and Alexis Jenni, *Les Mémoires dangereuses: De l'Algérie coloniale à la France d'aujourd'hui* (Paris: Albin Michel, 2016), p. 37.

Israel's Nationality Law, naturalisation can only be revoked if the person in question 'has committed an act of disloyalty towards the State of Israel'.[990] Indeed, this is encapsulated in the insult '[t]raître d'Arabe', yet it is in fact Amine who feels betrayed, by his wife, while himself betraying his Palestinian compatriots.

Far from being complicit in or even aware of his wife's attack, Amine's initial reaction on hearing that her body has been identified as bearing the marks of a suicide bomber is denial. This is not only rooted in his view of his wife as an assimilated member of Israeli society, an extension of himself, 'le meilleur de ma vie' (*A*, p. 70), but also in his humanistic worldview in which the dignity of life prevails. He cannot comprehend how anyone, not least of all his wife, could kill civilians, especially children, hence his denial: 'Ma femme n'est pas une tueuse d'enfants…' (*A*, p. 58). Indeed, his words '[c]e n'est pas elle. Ça ne peut pas être elle' (*A*, p. 44) suggest this denial is linked to the incredulity of the act. As far as Amine is concerned, rationally speaking, his wife is not capable of committing such an atrocity and therefore she cannot be responsible, yet his subjective viewpoint and solely rational outlook prove to be limiting.

When he has to identify the body which is believed to belong to his wife, apprehension soon gives way to fear:

[990] *Nationality Law, 5712-1952*.

> Je débouche sur la morgue comme un supplicié sur l'échafaud. Un médecin veille sur un autel… L'autel est recouvert d'un drap maculé de sang… Sous le drap maculé de sang, on devine des restes humains…
>
> J'ai soudain peur des regards qui se retournent vers moi.
>
> Mes prières résonnent à travers mon être telle une rumeur souterraine (*A*, p. 35).

When they remove the 'drap', Amine's response is at once an exclamation and a supplication: 'Mon Dieu! m'écrié-je' (*A*, p. 35). Although 'supplicié' means torture victim in English, the official translation renders it 'condemned man' which, coupled with the 'échafaud', associated with the death penalty, suggests complicity and guilt by extension, accentuated by the sense of being publicly disgraced in front of 'des regards qui se retournent vers moi' (*A*, p. 35). This is accompanied by the torture of grief, with the added dimension that not only was the act suicidal but it was also murderous. The metaphor of the altar evokes not only sacrifice but also worship, in the sense that he adored his wife, and yet this is obfuscated by the murderous nature of her own death, which he fails (or refuses) to recognise until he receives the letter from his wife sent from Bethlehem.

Indeed, the turning point for Amine is when he receives this letter, a kind of suicide

note, in which she explains, to borrow Abouali's phrasing, 'son devoir envers sa mère-patrie':[991] '*Tu voulais des enfants. Je voulais les mériter. Aucun enfant n'est pas tout à fait à l'abri s'il n'a pas de patrie*' (*A*, p. 76). Chloé Tatarnez writes that, '[l]e billet de Sihem adressé à son mari tente de lui expliquer qu'il lui est impossible de vivre dans un monde qui opéra une hiérarchisation dans les peuples, qui traite les Israéliens comme des humains mais exclut les Palestiniens de cette société'.[992] And yet it is more than this; it is not only the exclusion of Palestinians from society, but the lack of a homeland, indeed of a Palestinian state, to shelter the children she might have brought into the world. There is also an implicit reference to the first suicide female suicide bomber in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, Wafa Idris, who is mentioned by name in the film adaptation of *L'Attentat*.[993]

It is upon receiving the letter that Amine realises his wife is not an extension of his assimilated self, but rather a free-thinking, independently-acting individual with her own

[991] Abouali, *Yasmina Khadra ou la recherche de la vérité*, p. 105.

[992] Chloé Tazartez, 'Après l'attentat: fictions de l'événement terroriste dans les littératures arabe et états-unienne contemporaines' (unpublished doctoral thesis, Université Rennes 2, 2015), p. 386.

[993] Born in Ramallah, Idris was divorced by her husband for being infertile. See Shannon Dunn, 'The Female Martyr and the Politics of Death: An Examination of the Martyr Discourses of Vibia Perpetua and Wafa Idris', *Journal of the American Academy of Religion*, 78 (2010), 202-25 (pp. 205, 208-9, 211, 213, 218); and Mia Bloom, 'Female Suicide Bombers: A Global Trend', *Daedalus*, 136 (2007), 94-102 (97-98).

way of viewing the world and her own way of defining herself. Khadra justifies his choice of a female kamikaze in these terms: 'Depuis le temps qu'elle vit dans l'ombre de l'homme, jusqu'à s'y confondre, il lui arrive de s'insurger contre cet effacement traditionnel et de prendre son monde à contre-pied'.[994] And yet Sihem remains in the shadow of her husband, who is the novel's protagonist, and she is effaced by her own act, left up to the interpretations of others (mainly men). In Tazartez's words, Sihem is a 'figure [...] du terroriste absent, [...] investie par les [autres] personnages'.[995] Tazartez goes on to write that

> Sihem, par son incapacité à répondre de son geste et son statut d'absente dès le début du roman, acquiert une dimension fantasmatique, elle devient une surface de projection sur laquelle viennent se construire les différences facettes qui la caractérisent aux yeux d'Amine.[996]

Instead of being the subject, she is 'l'objet du discours', mostly by men, and 'réduite au silence dès le debut du roman' by Khadra himself.[997] Indeed, the only time she is given a

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[994] Yasmina Khadra qtd. in Loubna Bernichi, 'Après l'Algérie et l'Afghanistan, Yasmina Khadra s'attaque au conflit israélo-palestinien avec *L'Attentat*', *Maroc Hebdo International*, 4 November 2005, <http://www.maghress.com/fr/marochebdo/67221> [accessed 2 April 2015] (para 1 of 10).
[995] Tazartez, 'Après l'attentat', p. 353.
[996] *Ibid*., p. 300.
[997] *Ibid*., p. 353.

voice (by the male author) is through the letter.

The reference to children therein is particularly significant. Sihem disguises herself as a pregnant woman (*A*, p. 55) in order to hide the suicide bomb which kills Israeli civilians, including children celebrating a birthday party. Extending the female Algerian freedom-fighters as *poseuses de bombe* in the independence war, Sihem can be seen as a *porteuse de bombe*. As Abouali writes, 'Sihem portait le malheur indicible de sa patrie et de son peuple'; in other words, she carries the cause.[998] Instead of creating life, Sihem chooses to destroy it, convinced that this act would in some way be redemptive for her people. In this way, she can be seen to adhere to the view that 'the act of killing oneself' is 'part of a strategy to strike terror in the hearts and minds of the civilian population (a reminder of sorts about the indescribable suffering that Israel has inflicted on the Palestinians)'.[999] For Sihem, her aim was never to 'live up to' her status as a citizen of the state of Israel but rather to contribute towards providing the Palestinian people with a state of their own. The fact that she has Israeli nationality does not mean that she affiliates herself with the Israeli state, as reflected in her refusal to attend her husband's

[998] Abouali, *Yasmina Khadra ou la recherche de la vérité*, p. 199.
[999] Matthew Abraham, *Intellectual Resistance and the Struggle for Palestine* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014), p. 119.

prize-giving ceremony in the film adaptation, not wanting to endorse Arab integration into an Israeli society whose army oppresses Palestinians.

Unbeknown to her husband, Sihem defines herself as 'palestinienne à part entière' (*A*, p. 232) and embraces the Palestinian cause to the point of perceived self-sacrifice. Amine's nephew Adel attempts to justify the act, challenging his uncle to consider Sihem's reasoning:

> Sihem est femme avant d'être la tienne. Elle est morte pour les autres… […] Pourquoi veux-tu que Sihem reste en dehors de l'histoire de son peuple? Qu'avait-elle de plus ou de moins par rapport aux femmes qui s'étaient sacrifiées avant? C'est le prix à payer pour être libre… (*A*, p. 238).

Here, the idea emerges of selfless sacrifice on behalf of the Palestinian people as a response to a traumatic past and injustice in the present. Nasser Abufarha argues in *Making of a Human Bomb: An Ethnography of Palestinian Resistance* (2009) that

> [the concept of sacrifice] is a more appropriate way to describe the act of the human bomb than "suicide" in any of its forms, because it encompasses the transformations and exchanges that take place between the sacrificed human body, the *human*

> *bomb*, and the land of Palestine and the Palestinian people.[1000]

Sihem's Israeli citizenship, which allows her to live a comfortable life in Tel Aviv she cannot help but feel as hypocrisy, eventually becomes a stepping stone for terrorist activity, providing her with an opportunity to fight for this cause from within. Thus Sihem turns from 'implicated subject' to perpetrating agent. Amine, on the other hand, in the words of the imam whose blessing Sihem seeks before committing her suicide attack, '[s'est] désolidarisé depuis longtemps de leur Cause en optant pour une autre nationalité' (*A*, p. 157), and thus is most certainly implicated, and not just through his wife.

In this way, Amine can be seen as an 'implicated subject' who benefits from the system, and Sihem as both vicarious victim and active perpetrator, paradoxically (perhaps deliberately) implicating her husband by extension.[1001] According to Tazartez, 'alors que l'acte de sa femme suffit à le rayer de la société israélienne, il ne suffit pas à l'intégrer à la société palestinienne. Les personnes qui vénèrent sa femme comme une martyre ne l'acceptent pas, lui, comme un des leurs'.[1002] And yet this is a rather simplistic reading, as it

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[1000] Nasser Abufarha, *The Making of a Human Bomb: An Ethnography of Palestinian Resistance* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2009), p.15, original emphasis.

[1001] See Rothberg, 'Trauma Theory, Implicated Subjects, and the Question of Israel/Palestine' (para 3 of 10).

[1002] Tazartez, 'Après l'attentat', p. 336.

assumes that ‘la société palestinienne’ and ‘[l]es personnes qui vénèrent sa femme comme une martyre’ are one and the same, refusing to recognise the plurality and diversity of Palestinian society. Indeed, Amine’s family, also part of wider Palestinian society, welcome him ‘home’ with open arms, regardless of whether or not he views his late wife as a martyr.

Rehumanisation

In his investigation into Sihem’s intentions, Amine gradually comes to understand the thinking behind violence construed as resistance against the oppressor, in this case Israel. The process begins with his first visit to Bethlehem in over ten years:

> Bethléem a beaucoup changé depuis mon dernier passage […]. Engrossée par les cohortes de réfugiés désertant leurs contrées devenues des stands de tir, elle propose de nouveaux fatras de taudis en parpaings nus, dressés les uns contre les autres comme des barricades […]. On se croirait dans un immense centre de regroupement où tous les damnés de la terre se sont donné rendez-vous (*A*, p. 120).

The term ‘[e]ngrossée’ connotes a sense of impregnation, which recalls Sihem’s fake pregnancy, her bump concealing a bomb, as

though the town of Bethlehem itself is a time bomb. This can also be seen as a reference to Rachel, a matriarchal figure in both the Bible and the Qur'an, weeping for her children, who here would be the refugees.[1003] Meanwhile, the comparison to barricades recalls revolution and resistance against authority, and the narrator acknowledges through the use of simile that it could be construed in this way. Moreover, the use of the conditional tense – '[o]n se croirait' – shows an understanding of how these Palestinians might be cast as or perceive themselves as 'les damnés de la terre'. The reference to Fanon's work on Algerian resistance is not unintentional, albeit a passing one. Ruchama Marton points out that, although Fanon's *Les Damnés de la terre* was not translated into Hebrew until 2006, 'les Palestiniens le connaissaient fort bien, particulièrement les combattants pour la libération'.[1004] Thus Fanon's opening words, '[l]ibération nationale, renaissance nationale, restitution de la nation au peuple'[1005] have to some extent been absorbed into the prevailing Palestinian narrative of resistance and self-determination.

[1003] See Jeremiah 31:15. Rachel's tomb in Bethlehem is considered a holy site by Jews, Christians, and Muslims alike.

[1004] Ruchama Marton, 'En relisant Fanon. Le droit à la folie', *Tumultes*, 2 (2008), 67-78 (p. 67). See also Sue-Ann Harding, 'Fanon in Arabic Tracks and Traces', in *Translating Frantz Fanon Across Continents and Languages*, ed. by Kathryn Batchelor and Sue-Ann Harding (New York: Routledge, 2017), pp. 98-128, particularly pp. 118-22.

[1005] Frantz Fanon, *Les Damnés de la terre* (Paris: Gallimard, 1991 [1961]), p. 65.

Here, I would disagree with what Harrison writes in *Transcolonial Maghreb*, namely that Khadra's novel 'presents Palestinian suicide bombing in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict alone, without connecting it to a larger history of colonialism and violent anti-colonial resistance'.[1006] Indeed, it appears Harrison herself has changed her mind since publishing the book, as in a more recent article entitled 'For a Transcolonial Reading of the Contemporary Algerian Novel', she turns to *L'Attentat* as one of three texts which for her 'exemplify the transcolonial imagination as a mode of renegotiating the colonial past and reactualizing anticolonial critique in the present'.[1007] More specifically, she notes that *L'Attentat* is 'traversed by allusions to the Algerian war of independence',[1008] yet she does not refer to the 'centre de regroupement', a key allusion, and an unsettling one.

Indeed, by describing the area as comparable to 'un immense centre de regroupement', Khadra calls to mind the 'centres de regroupement' in Algeria. Although the 'centres de regroupement' in Algeria were often referred to as 'camps', Khadra chooses the term 'centre' over 'camp'

[1006] Harrison, *Transcolonial Maghreb*, pp. 9-10.
[1007] Harrison, 'For a Transcolonial Reading of the Contemporary Algerian Novel', p. 103. The other two texts are Anouar Benmalek, *L'Enfant du peuple ancient* (Paris: Pauvert, 2000); and Rachid Boudjedra, *Printemps* (Paris: Grasset, 2014). She also refers to Benaïssa's *La Dernière nuit d'un damné*. See Harrison, 'For a Transcolonial Reading of the Contemporary Algerian Novel', p. 104.
[1008] Harrison, 'For a Transcolonial Reading of the Contemporary Algerian Novel', p. 106.

here, perhaps to avoid equation or controversy. As Sylvie Thénault notes with regard to Michel Rocard's groundbreaking work in bringing the nature of these regroupment schemes to light, '[l]e choix sémantique consistant à parler de « centre » ou de « village », en outre, traduit une gêne certaine à utiliser le mot « camp », qui favoriserait un amalgame abusif avec les camps de concentration nazis'.[1009] She is careful to distinguish '[l]es camps de regroupement' from 'des camps d'internement où étaient détenus sans motif ni durée prédéterminée les individus considérés comme suspects ou dangereux', and yet she considers the term 'camps' justifiable: 'les regroupements pouvant s'apparenter, dans un premier temps, à des camps de réfugiés'.[1010] This is where the parallel can be made with Palestinian refugee camps. With regard to the 'regroupements' in Algeria, Thénault concludes that 'l'opération laissait des centaines de familles sans logement, sans ressources et sans secours',[1011] in other words, 'damnés de la terre'. Moreover, the actions which accompanied the 'regroupements' in the name of 'pacification' during the Algerian War of Independence included expulsion by force and house demolitions,[1012] both echoed

[1009] Sylvie Thénault, 'Rappels historiques sur les camps de regroupement', in Michel Rocard, *Rapport sur les camps de regroupement* (Paris: Mille et une nuits, 2003), pp. 227-38 (p. 229).
[1010] *Ibid*., p. 229.
[1011] *Ibid*., p. 230.
[1012] *Ibid*., p. 230.

in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, albeit in varying ways, and alluded to in *L'Attentat*. By this logic, the Palestinians are the new 'damnés de la terre', now that Algerians have gained their independence from the French coloniser.

As Orlowsky writes, '[f]or the Palestinians, violence and liberation are a means to remove the current colonial state, as they perceive Israel to be'.[1013] It is within an extreme version of this narrative that the suicide bomber becomes 'a biopolitical force of resistance', to quote Matthew Abraham, who links the Palestinian struggle with the Algerian War of Independence:

> As a biopolitical strategy of resistance requiring the most extreme sacrifice by the martyr, suicide bombing needs to be understood within a historical frame of anticolonial struggle invoking the resistance of the National Liberation Front (FLN) in Algeria – the very resistance at the center of Fanon's *The Wretched of the Earth*.[1014]

In *Les Damnés de la terre*, Fanon sees anticolonial violence as an inevitable part of the Algerian struggle against the French colonial force, a necessary last resort and means to an end: Algerian independence.

[1013] Orlowsky, 'The Hundred Year Headache: Israel, Palestine and Frantz Fanon', p. 200.
[1014] Abraham, *Intellectual Resistance and the Struggle for Palestine*, p. 119.

Abraham draws a direct parallel between the Algerian struggle thus construed and the Palestinian 'Cause'. For him, there is no question; the latter *needs* to be understood as an echo of the former. Khadra is more subtle and less prescriptive in his approach; through his passing reference to Fanon's work, he suggests how a theory like Abraham's might be used as a way of rationalising the seemingly irrational act of suicide bombing by placing it within the larger context of an anticolonial struggle. In other words, for Khadra this is one way of framing the conflict, principally by Palestinians who identify with the 'Cause', Sihem providing an extreme fictionalised example.

It is only when Amine sees for himself the collective devastation of Jenin – following the Battle of Jenin in 2002, often referred to as a massacre – and personally experiences the demolition of the patriarchal home, that he comes to understand some of the intense frustration and desperation that Sihem appropriated. Thus, through the character of Amine, Khadra leads the reader to sympathise with Sihem, and to appreciate her solidarity with and desire to do something for the Palestinian people, while being careful to steer this sympathy away from any justification of terrorism against civilians. As Spencer writes,

> the result is not a novel that encourages sympathy for those who commit acts of non-state terror, let

> alone one that seeks to justify their crimes, but a work that, to the contrary, adds a political and historical context to terrorism's affective impact precisely in order to create a space for comprehensive moral and political judgements.[1015]

This is a space into which the reader is invited. As Abouali notes, '[Amine] reconnaît […] les abus, les agressions et les contre-attaques mais il continue à rejeter la violence. Il sait désormais qu'il est condamné aussi à jouer pleinement son rôle dans le conflit, cependant il reste fidele à ses idéaux jusqu'à sa mort'.[1016] In a sense, Amine's death releases him from having to play this role (whatever form that might take), leaving it up to the reader, who in turn becomes an implicated subject, to respond within the humanist framework set up by the first-person narrator.

The other way of framing the conflict sees Palestinian terrorism as the causal factor leading to repressive action by the Israeli army, hence the destruction of the patriarchal home at the end of the novel, following the suicide attack of Amine's cousin Wissam. This is a position advocated by Amine's friend Naveed, an Israeli police officer:

> Les intégristes palestiniens envoient des gamins se faire exploser dans un

[1015] Spencer, 'Reading Lolita in Tel Aviv', p. 399.
[1016] Abouali, *Yasmina Khadra ou la recherche de la vérité*, p. 217.

> abri-bus. Le temps de ramasser nos morts, nos états-majors leur expédient des hélicos pour foutre en l'air leur taudis. Au moment où nos gouvernants se préparent à crier victoire, un autre attentat remet les pendules à l'heure (*A*, p. 72).

Both narratives entail a vicious cycle of violence and counter-violence. The alternative is suggested by Benjamin, Kim's brother and a pacifist Israeli Jew, described by Abouali as 'un de ces personnages secondaires qui tentent de dépasser les positions figées des belligérants'.[1017] In response to the remark that '[c]e sont les Palestiniens qui refusent d'entendre raison', Benjamin replies, '[c']est peut-être nous qui refusons de les écouter' (*A*, p. 71). As Abouali notes, '[c]et intellectuel militant dénonce le langage de la violence qui triomphe des deux côtés et appelle de ses vœux un dialogue où l'on ferait preuve d'écoute'.[1018] Abouali goes on to write that 'cette voix exprime une opinion au cœur même d'Israël appelant à sortir du cercle vicieux de la violence et cherchant l'établissement de la paix'.[1019] The choice of the term 'militant' (the French word for activist) is an interesting one; rather than promoting violence, Benjamin advocates for fighting against prejudice through dialogue.

[1017] *Ibid*., p. 189.
[1018] *Ibid*., p. 189.
[1019] *Ibid*., p. 189.

This recalls the words of Palestinian pacifist in Haddad's *Palestine*:

> Il faut patienter, *lutter sur les fronts de l'opinion*, de la politique locale et de la diplomatie. Nous atteindrons notre objectif en tournant une fois pour toutes le dos aux attentats-suicides et à l'Intifada armée (*P*, p. 67, emphasis mine).

Here militant language is used to advocate for a pacifist, dialogic approach; this is an unarmed struggle, where the frontline is public opinion and local politics. Thus, through the character of Benjamin, Khadra suggests that the way forward is dialogue, beginning with self-examination. In the interview with *Aljazeera*, returning again to the idea of (self-)sacrifice, Khadra states, '[l]e plus grand sacrifice ce n'est pas de mourir pour une cause mais de continuer d'aimer la vie malgré tout'.[1020] This is a philosophy that he writes into the character of Amine as humanist and doctor, upholding the dignity of life. Indeed, even when Amine comes to an understanding of his wife's conviction, and sees for the first time Israel's destructive military tactics, whether perceived as colonial violence or repressive reaction, he still refuses to condone his wife's act on the basis that life is to be preserved rather than destroyed. In Tazartez's words, he continues to hold to

[1020] Khadra in interview with Rowland, 'Yasmina Khadra: "A Battle of Extremes"'.

'[l'affirmation] d'une posture éthique qui défend la vie coûte que coûte et refuse de se plier aux exigences de violence'.[1021] The tragedy for the reader is that his own life is destroyed within the viscous cycle of violence and counter-violence, begging the question: 'Ça va durer jusqu'à quand?' (*A*, p. 72). As Abouali puts it, '[l]e tragique naît justement du fait que les bonnes intentions sont condamnées à périr'.[1022]

Indeed, the second attack, which anachronistically opens the novel, forms 'une partie de la réponse à l'attentat commis par Sihem, mimant la spirale de violence qui embrase la région'.[1023] Harrison draws our attention to 'the ambiguity of the novel's title, which refers both to Sihem's act of terror and the attack that kills the narrator', that is, 'his accidental killing in an IDF missile attack on Jenin'.[1024] Similarly, Abouali writes, '[d]eux attentats importants sont exposés dans le roman éponyme. Le premier ouvre et clôt le roman alors que le second est l'événement central qui déclenche l'action et l'entretient jusqu'au bout'.[1025] While the attack perpetrated by his wife drives the main narrative, the attack which takes Amine's life can be seen as both originary and apocalyptic,

[1021] Tazartez, 'Après l'attentat', p. 234. See Khadra, *L'Attentat*, pp. 240-41.
[1022] Abouali, *Yasmina Khadra ou la recherche de la vérité*, p. 327.
[1023] *Ibid*., p. 34.
[1024] Harrison, 'For a Transcolonial Reading of the Contemporary Algerian Novel', p. 106.
[1025] Abouali, *Yasmina Khadra ou la recherche de la vérité*, p. 32.

making his 'quête de la vérité' appear futile.[1026] In Harrison's words, the title 'succinctly captures the polyvalence of the term *terror*, which can refer both to acts of resistance targeting civilians, and the far more formidable use of "state terror"'.[1027] She uses the case of Algeria to illustrate this point, which saw both 'acts of resistance' in the Algerian War of Independence and 'state terror' in the Black Decade. However, both the comparison and the choice of language are problematic. Harrison suggests that the IDF are deliberately terrorising Palestinians, and that acts targeting civilians are understandable within the framework of resistance to this 'far more formidable' force of Israeli 'state terror'. It is interesting to note here that Khadra takes the opposite extreme, declaring that, 'il n'y a aucune similitude entre ce qui se passe aujourd'hui en Palestine et le drame vécu par les Algériens ces dix dernières années'.[1028]

Interestingly, O'Rourke misunderstands the ending of the novel, which is deliberately ambiguous. She thinks that Amine is the victim of the attack his niece intends to perpetrate, whereas in fact both Amine and his niece are caught up in a raid by the Israeli army, targeting the radicalising sheikh whose blessing the niece is hoping to receive, something which Amine is determined to

[1026] *Ibid*., p. 115.
[1027] Harrison, 'For a Transcolonial Reading of the Contemporary Algerian Novel', p. 106.
[1028] Khadra qtd. in Ali, '« J'ai voulu écrire LE livre du conflit israélo-palestinien »' (para 11 of 29).

thwart. Abouali notes the irony of this: '[e]n voulant sauver Faten, et aussi les victimes de son éventuel attentat, en œuvrant pour le triomphe de la vie, il meurt ironiquement'.[1029] O'Rourke, however, does helpfully point out '[t]he close relationship between the victim and jihadist', as depicted in Khadra's *L'Attentat*. Indeed, she states that 'jihadist and victim are inseparable in the cycle of violence'.[1030] Taking this a step further, the jihadist (seen as perpetrator) can have a self-perception as victim and freedom fighter, engaging in armed struggle as a last resort to resist what she perceives as the colonial oppressor which is seen to perpetrate 'state terror'. Here, the victim-perpetrator binary – or the victim-jihadist – binary becomes blurred, not least of all because the jihadist can also be seen as a victim of despair and radicalisation.

Before Amine can reconcile his Israeli nationality with his rediscovery of his Bedouin roots (inextricably linked to the patriarchal land) and his newly found sympathy towards – if not solidarity with – the Palestinian 'Cause', his life is taken from him by the very state which had provided him shelter. The novel ends, then, in a similar way to Haddad's *Palestine*, with tragedy and irresolution, reflective of the ongoing and unresolved conflict. Indeed, as Abouali notes,

[1029] Abouali, *Yasmina Khadra ou la recherche de la vérité*, p. 216. See also p. 225.
[1030] O'Rourke, *Representing Jihad*, p. 76.

> l'étude menée par le romancier aboutit à l'absence de possibilité de résolution du problème posé dans les conditions de l'époque. Aussi longtemps que le malentendu entre l'Occident et l'Orient persistera, aussi longtemps qu'ils continueront leur dialogue de sourds, aucune issue ne serait envisageable.[1031]

This absence of the very possibility of resolution is obfuscated by the hints at dialogue within the novel and the novel as a dialogic space itself. Through *L'Attentat*, Khadra seeks to reach across the Mediterranean and to bridge the gap between East and West, challenging orientalist stereotypes of the Bedouin and the terrorist, raising awareness of injustice against Palestinians, and calling for reconciliation – between Arabs and Jews, Palestinians and Israelis – in the name of a common humanity.

[1031] Abouali, *Yasmina Khadra ou la recherche de la vérité*, p. 284.

Conclusion: Negotiable Irresolution

This interdisciplinary thesis has engaged with the fields of memory studies, (Francophone) postcolonial studies, and Jewish studies, fields which share key concerns but which are not always in communication with one another. Memory studies goes some way in bridging the gap between postcolonial studies and Holocaust studies, notably in the work of Rothberg and Silverman. Their theories of multidirectional memory and palimpsestic memory respectively, particularly in the Francophone context, have proved useful in analysing the historical backdrop to the ongoing Israeli-Palestinian conflict, overshadowed as it is by the interrelated traumatic legacies of the Shoah and colonialism explored in the Franco-Maghrebi texts analysed here. Yet these texts and their authors refuse categorisation, theoretical or otherwise. The authors studied here explore the contemporary and ongoing Israeli-Palestinian conflict; the complicated nature of Zionism and the State of Israel, formerly part of British Mandate Palestine, which contains aspects of colonialism, anti-colonialism, and postcolonialism; and the seemingly contradictory identity of the Arab-Jew among other hybrid and indeed plural self-definitions.

The primary texts provide an alternative angle to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, written as they are by contemporary Francophone North African writers, who have

an awareness of the historical backdrop of genocide and imperialism, and who themselves negotiate multiple identities through filiation and affiliation, including French, Arab, Jewish, Berber/Amazigh, and Palestinian. Rothberg's concept of 'multidirectional memory' has been useful in that it gives a name to the interrelated memories of genocide and colonialism which are 'subject to ongoing negotiation',[1032] yet these texts also interrogate and unsettle fixed identity positions in their response to the actuality of the ongoing conflict, which is not just about memory wars but also about contemporary occupation, political impasse, and existential fear. Of course, identity and memory, identities and memories, are interlinked. As Haddad writes in *Palestine*, 'Qui est-on sans mémoire?' (p. 29) In the current context of political impasse and periodic outbursts of violence which in turn play out on French soil, the fictional texts explored in this thesis are significant, in that they acknowledge the complicated overlapping historical traumas of the Shoah, colonialism, and the Nakba, while challenging identity binaries and imagining alternative futures. They steer away from what Rothberg terms 'memory wars'[1033] and polarised narratives which label Palestinians either as terrorists or as victims of a neo-Nazi Israeli

[1032] Rothberg, *Multidirectional Memory*, p. 3.
[1033] Rothberg, 'From Gaza to Warsaw', p. 523.

occupation, highlighting the potential of what Assmann terms 'dialogic remembering'.[1034]

By focusing on the 1990s to the present day, the thesis has explored fictional responses to the breakdown of the so-called peace process, providing tentative spaces for dialogue and re-evaluation within the text which, if not a neutral space, allows for various memories and identities to be negotiated, reflecting the authors' own ongoing process of self-evaluation and positioning in relation to the conflict. The thesis has thus adopted and developed the concept of unsettling memories which trouble fixed identity positions within the context of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict as negotiated in the lives and works of contemporary Franco-Maghrebi writers. Through my analysis of the primary texts studied herein, in light of the authors' own trajectories, I have demonstrated the flimsiness of binaries between Arab, Jew, Palestinian, and Israeli identities, which are in tension with rather than in opposition to one another, steeped as they are in interrelated traumatic pasts. There are multiple layers here, with regard to both the authors themselves and the characters depicted in their texts, conflicted (but not always conflicting) identities: Jew, Arab, Muslim, Druze, Bedouin, Berber, Maghrebi and French or Francophone.

[1034] See Assmann, 'From Collective Violence to a Common Future', pp. 8-22.

The primary texts studied here thus provide a space for dialogue within literature, within the author, and within the reader, as they stage encounters between Israelis and Palestinians, putting narratives of victimhood, anti-colonialism, and self-defence in dialogue with one another, though careful not to equate them. What is there to conclude a conflict so unresolved, the conflict in that far-off but close-by region and within the writers themselves? In a way that is not always happening on the ground, the writers negotiate identities and histories, engage in sometimes painful dialogue, dare to imagine and hope for a better future by creatively delving into a multi-layered traumatic past. Through alternative identities, the texts trouble the typically antagonistic Arab versus Jew, Israeli versus Palestinian binaries, which are entrenched in the so-called Arab-Israeli or Israeli-Palestinian conflict. By providing alternative memories to polarised narratives of victory and victimhood, challenging assumptions and creating space for dialogic encounter, these texts imaginatively posit alternative futures, yet steer away from utopian happy endings, true to the current reality of political impasse.

The writers, all of whom live in France and the majority of whom were born in North Africa (with the exception of Zenatti, whose parents were born there), approach the Israeli-Palestinian conflict through the lens of previous Arab-Jewish coexistence in North

Africa, while conscious of the interrelated traumatic legacies of the Shoah and colonialism. These texts can be seen as Mediterranean, in that they are written by Maghrebi writers living in France writing about a strip of land which itself borders the Mediterranean Sea, a connecting site which contains the potential for points of contact beyond conflict. Rather than pitting the Orient and the Occident against one another, they embrace what Haddad terms the 'orientalo-occidentale' space of the Mediterranean,[1035] challenging the 'clash of civilisations' myth.[1036] Moreover, the Franco-Maghrebi perspective on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict provides nuance, influenced as it is by the historical narratives of the Shoah and colonialism on the one hand, and experience of Jewish-Muslim relations and assimilation in France on the other. What Craps describes as the 'interrelatedness of memories of the Holocaust and colonial suffering'[1037] forms the backdrop of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, and this is recognised by the authors studied in this thesis, who do not equate Zionism with colonialism (as other Franco-Maghrebi writers do) but reveal the colonial, anti-colonial, and postcolonial aspects of the State of Israel.

[1035] Haddad, 'L'Énergie des lointains', in *Apulée n°1 – Galaxies identitaires*, pp. 9-11.
[1036] See Said, 'The Myth of the "Clash of Civilizations"'.
[1037] Craps, *Postcolonial Witnessing*, p. 81.

Memmi is particularly useful when it comes to analysing this aspect of the primary texts, as he writes of both Arabs and Jews as oppressed subjects liberated through Arab nationalism and Zionism, respectively, yet these movements cannot be equated, as certain forms of the latter have arguably led to the oppression of Palestinian Arabs and denial of Palestinian nationalism. Memmi, however, argues for the coexistence of Zionism and Palestinian nationalism, to be fulfilled in a two-state solution, as do the authors of the primary texts studied here, but they lament contemporary manifestations of Zionism which impede Palestinian nationalism from reaching its fulfilment. Memmi is particularly influential in the Arab-Jew debate, which has been key to this thesis, in which I have argued that the Arab-Jew is in opposition to the *pied-noir* Jew, a contradiction in terms, and that the Jewish-Palestinian, though holding potential, is an impossibility in the current situation. Yet the Arab-Jew concept is also a limiting one; it does not make room for Berber or Bedouin identity or indeed for national affinities (whether Israeli or Palestinian), nor is it a term chosen widely as self-definition among Jews from Arab countries living in Israel. Moreover, 'Arab-Jew' in the Israeli or American context (here I am thinking of Shohat in particular) is not the same as 'Juif-Arabe' in the Francophone context; even the positioning of the words changes the

emphasis, due to linguistic differences in grammatical structure.

In the first chapter, entitled 'The European Shoah and the Arab Jew in Israel', I examined Zenatti's novella *Mensonges*, paying particular attention to its exploration of postmemory, transmission and (mis)appropriation of Shoah trauma in relation to Jewish, French, Maghrebi, and Israeli identities. In Zenatti's more recent novel *Jacob, Jacob*, she writes more openly about the interconnectedness of colonial and Shoah memory particularly in relation to Algeria, the legacy of which overshadows the Israeli-Palestinian conflict as explored in other texts she has written, including *Mensonges*. This novella explores the complexities of growing up with a keen awareness of the Shoah as a Jew living in France, while negotiating Arab heritage following decolonisation, specifically within the State of Israel. In the light of the autobiographical translator-narrator's relationship with Shoah survivor Aharon Appelfeld, who becomes a surrogate grandfather, I suggested that *Mensonges* be read as a *récit d'affiliation*, an extension of the *récit de filiation*, combining 'filial memory' and 'affiliative memory', to build on Hirsch's theorisation of postmemory.[1038] Alongside their dual connection to the Shoah, direct for Aharon Appelfeld and indirect for Valérie Zenatti, there is a common experience, albeit

[1038] Hirsch, 'The Generation of Postmemory', p. 114.

it temporally displaced, which defines them both: they each had to denounce their diasporic identity upon moving to Israel in order to integrate into society. Conversely, it is Valérie's Arab heritage and lack of direct connection to the Shoah that excludes her from the Israeli collective which by this stage had absorbed Shoah memory into its national identity, whereas Aharon was marginalised for having such a connection, which he had to suppress in the process of being made a 'New Jew'. Extending the *récit de filiation* to *récit d'affiliation* opens a new way of reading texts which combine autobiographical, biographical, and fictional elements, particularly in relation to the Shoah, raising ethical questions surrounding appropriation and empathy. Moreover, Zenatti's teenage novel *Une bouteille dans la mer de Gaza*, although somewhat problematically suggesting that reconciliation can only take place through the intermediary of Europe, promotes 'dialogic memory'[1039] by its very epistolary structure. Similarly, the multilingual film adaptation encourages the viewer to engage with multiple perspectives.

The second chapter, entitled 'The *Pied-Noir* Jew and the Arab Israeli' focused on Slimane Benaïssa's play *L'Avenir oublié*. Having experienced exile himself as a dissident Berber writer who escaped Algeria during the *décennie noire*, Benaïssa identifies

[1039] See Assmann, 'Dialogic Memory', pp. 199-214.

with fellow Algerian writer Chouraqui, although he distances himself from this Jewish historian by labelling him a *pied-noir* and a Zionist. Yet, through their dialogue which underpins the dialogic (if didactic) play *L'Avenir oublié*, these writers demonstrate the potential for co-existing narratives of trauma and nostalgia, self-determination and survival, to be shared between Israeli Jews and Palestinian Arabs, particularly in the context of mutual recognition as established in the Oslo Accords. Indeed, the hopeful ending to the play is reflective of the time in which it was set; this was before the Second Intifada, the separation barrier, and the political impasse which replaced the crumbling peace process. Moreover, Benaïssa's plea for recognition of the Shoah across the Arab world and Chouraqui's engagement with the anti-colonial movement in Algeria shape their approach to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. They each advocate the self-determination of Jews through Zionism and of Palestinians through a specific Arab nationalism, comparable but not equatable to the Algerian nationalist movement. Therefore, the dialogic premise of the play, inspired by Benaïssa's encounter with Algerian-turned-Israeli writer Chouraqui, sets the scene for interfaith encounter, coexistence of Arab and Jewish identities, and mutual recognition of traumatic pasts, but this is limited to the younger, Oslo generation prior to the Second Intifada. The concepts of the Abrahamic and the Semite

were explored as alternatives to Jews versus Arabs discourse, revealing potential for both reconciliation and further discord. Chouraqui as an understudied writer has made a noteworthy contribution to the debate surrounding the Abrahamic, although this holds the risk of reducing the conflict to a solely religious one.

The third chapter, 'The Arab-Jew and the Jewish-Palestinian', analysed Hubert Haddad's novel *Palestine*, and specifically its potential for what Rothberg terms 'differentiated solidarity',[1040] through the conflicted identity of the Jewish-Palestinian alongside that of the Arab-Jew. Haddad recognises the backdrop of the Shoah and French colonialism as well as the neo-colonial aspects of contemporary Israeli policy. His own relationship to Israel is connected to the loss of his brother, a Tunisian-born Israeli artist who felt most at home among the Arab population of East Jerusalem, fought for Palestinian rights, and became disillusioned by the seemingly irresolvable conflict. Haddad's *Palestine*, written after the Second Intifada, reflects this disillusionment while suggesting the potential benefit of deferring one's own memory narrative in order to engage with that of the other, yet warning against the dangers of denying, ignoring, or suppressing either narrative. The novel has a tragic ending, true to the contemporary

[1040] See Rothberg, 'From Gaza to Warsaw', p. 526.

moment. Although it hints at the possibility of peaceful coexistence between Jews and Arabs in a two-state scenario, it acknowledges ongoing prejudices and injustices which are preventing this from happening, and therefore the current impossibility of such peaceful coexistence as advocated by Said, who coined the term 'Jewish-Palestinian' in an attempt to shake up the debate. This hyphenating of supposedly conflicting identities suggests the necessity and the reality of coexistence in a land to which both Israeli Jews and Palestinian Arabs feel a deep sense of connection, a land which is part of their respective and shared collective memories.

The fourth chapter, 'The Israeli-Bedouin and the Palestinian-Israeli', took a detailed look at Yasmina Khadra's novel *L'Attentat*, with its deconstruction of the polarised positions of integration and fundamentalism, advocating for peaceful resistance to the status quo of violence and counter-violence. The generational, postmemory aspect is an important one in the novel: while Kim's father lives in the shadow of the Shoah, reminding the reader of the tragedy which led many Jews to embrace Zionism in various forms, Amine's great uncle is a living reminder of the Nakba and Palestine as *patrie*. To combine theories put forward by Hirsch, Assmann, and Rothberg, when these filial memories are differentiated, the possibility for a dialogic mode of solidarity emerges. Yet the Shoah-surviving

grandfather's voice is suppressed and the Palestinian patriarchal home is demolished, revealing the complexities of post-trauma and ongoing structural violence, which impede dialogue and solidarity. Like in Haddad's *Palestine*, the tragic ending of Khadra's *L'Attentat* makes (re)conciliation between these identities and memories impossible, leaving the implicated reader to reflect on the current political impasse and imagine alternative possibilities.

Through unsettling memories and troubling identities, combining introspection and outward-facing reflection (or extrospection), the authors studied here can be seen to 'work towards modes of ethical responsiveness which are articulated through the politics of reconciliation', in turn implicating the reader as 'ethical respondent' and an integral part of this ongoing (re)negotiation.[1041] This thesis has raised questions which remain to be explored: how can affiliative memory form part of an ethical response to traumatic legacies and contemporary conflict? How can dialogue and solidarity be achieved in the context of post-trauma, existential fear, and ongoing structural violence? What potential does literature have in shaping memory of interrelated traumatic pasts? The thesis has demonstrated that a Franco-Maghrebi perspective can promote a dialogic approach through fiction which

[1041] Whitlock, 'In the Second Person', p. 211.

troubles fixed identity positions and entrenched memories surrounding the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, but these remain irresolvable much like the conflict itself, and open to (re)negotiation as 'im-possible'.[1042] A tentative next step would be to create and revive links like the one forged between Benaïssa and Chouraqui, and, more recently, between Sansal and Grossman: Arab/Berber and Jewish writers engaging in dialogue to negotiate irresolution and to promote peace, acknowledging the traumatic past, addressing present injustice, and working towards an alternative future.[1043]

[1042] See François Raffoul, 'Derrida et l'éthique de l'im-possible', *Revue de Métaphysique et de Morale*, 1 (2007), 73-88.

[1043] See Leménager, 'Boualem Sansal et David Grossman lancent une ONU des écrivains'.

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